WEDNESDAY
March 4, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
16 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

Vol. 57 • No. 53

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

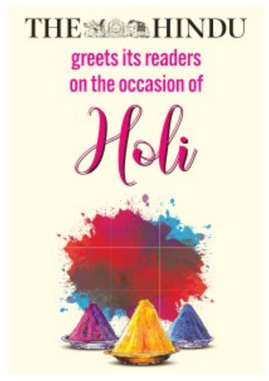
To subscribe, give a missed call at 9828331787 or scan QR code

Printed at » Chennai » Coimbatore » Bengaluru » Hyderabad » Madurai » Noida » Visakhapatnam » Thiruvananthapuram » Kochi » Vijayawada » Mangaluru » Tiruchirapalli » Kolkata » Hubballi » Mohali » Malappuram » Mumbai » Lucknow » Cuttack » Patna

NEARBY

Centre-State relations: CM writes to Stalin

BENGALURU
Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has written to his Tamil Nadu counterpart M.K. Stalin expressing "strong support" for initiating a national conversation on Union-State relations. » PAGE 6



OPPORTUNITIES » PAGE 3

Battered Iran attacks oil infra targets in West Asia

Tehran strikes U.S. embassies in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait as war enters fourth day; energy facilities in the region come under attack; Israel bombards Iran, goes deeper into Lebanon, targets Hezbollah

Agence France-Presse
DUBAI

Iran stepped up its attacks on economic targets and U.S. missions across West Asia on Tuesday as U.S. President Donald Trump said the U.S.-Israel strikes have inflicted wide damages on the Islamic Republic while warning it was "too late" for it to seek talks to escape the war.

As drones and missiles crashed into oil facilities and U.S. embassies in the region, Washington's ally Israel bombarded targets in Iran and pushed troops deeper into Lebanon to battle the Tehran-backed militia Hezbollah.

Loud explosions were heard in Iraq's Erbil and across cities of Doha, Dubai, and Abu Dhabi in the UAE on Tuesday night, which Dubai authorities said were caused by "interception operations" by air defence forces.

Tuesday's attacks came after Iran widened its targets in the war in its fourth day to include infrastructure in Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar – where the state-run energy firm suspended LNG production, sending European energy prices skyrocketing.

An attack from two drones on the U.S. Embassy in Riyadh caused a "limited fire", according to Saudi Arabia's Defence Ministry, and the embassy urged Americans to avoid the compound. It followed an attack on the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait, that announced it had been closed until further notice.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 10
MORE REPORTS ON
» PAGES 9, 11, & 14

Grey horizon: A tall plume of black smoke ascends following an explosion in the UAE's Fujairah industrial zone on Tuesday. AFP

'India has 25 days of crude oil stock'

NEW DELHI
India has 'sufficient stocks' of crude oil and energy products, including petrol and diesel for the next 25 days each, sources in the government said on Tuesday. The crude reserve does not include that from the emergency-earmarked Special Petroleum Reserve, the source said. » PAGE 13

RCB matches to return to Chinnaswamy

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) announced on Tuesday that it will play five of its seven league stage matches at the iconic M. Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bengaluru, ending months of uncertainty.

In the nine months that have passed since the tragic stampede during RCB's IPL 2025 title celebrations, that resulted in 11 deaths, the stadium has missed out on hosting several big ticket cricket outings.

In a relief to cricket fans, IPL 2026 will not be added to this list.

The Karnataka State Cricket Association had given a commitment to the Karnataka government to put in place security protocols, following which the government had given conditional nod to resuming matches.

DETAILS ON
» PAGE 16

EC REVIEWS
Poll dates for 4 States, 1 U.T. may be out next week
NEWS » PAGE 10

VOLATILE TRADE
Pakistan's arms diplomacy demands India's attention
Surge in arms deal tilts geopolitics in Pak.'s favour
EDITORIAL » PAGE 8

SEMIFINAL BATTLE
Proteas hold the edge against Black Caps
SPORT » PAGE 15

Colours of joy

Devotees celebrate Holi at Shri Govardhan Nath Haveli in Bengaluru on Tuesday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Child care leave can be availed even for preparing child for exams: High Court

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Rejecting the contention of the Union government that the Child Care Leave (CCL) can be granted only for the exact period of the examination schedule, the High Court of Karnataka has said that the preparatory phase preceding the examinations is equally significant and the norms impose no restriction to avail CCL for preparing the child for exams.

A Division Bench comprising Justice S.G. Pandit and Justice K.V. Aravind passed the order while rejecting the petition filed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the Bengaluru-based Centre For Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC).

The MeitY and C-DAC had challenged the Central Administrative Tribunal's order of allowing the plea of Kavita V., an employee in C-DAC, to avail herself of CCL till May 20 to prepare her son for two phases of CBSE exams.

She had sought CCL from December 16, 2025, to May 20, 2026, but the C-DAC had granted only 18 days of CCL from February 16 to March 7, the schedule for the first phase examinations.

In its February 5 order, the tribunal had granted her leave from February 6 to May 20.

Pointing out that a bare perusal of Rule 43-C of the Central Civil Services (Leave) Rules, 1972, clearly indicates that the period of leave is not confined solely to the duration of the examination, the Bench observed that the preparatory phase preceding the examination is equally significant.

Also, the Bench made it clear that the Rule vests the government servant with the discretion to seek CCL when the child requires his or her presence and no discretion is conferred in the rules upon the employer or the competent authority to adjudicate upon the sufficiency of the reasons.

In the absence of any such power on the employer, imposing a restriction on her on the period of leave sought would be impermissible, the Bench said while dismissing the petition.

Brace for traffic snarls as M.G. Road to be asphalted

Chetan B.C.
BENGALURU

Commuters passing through the Central Business District (CBD) of Bengaluru will have to brace themselves for 15 days of traffic snarls as Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC) plans to take up the much-awaited asphalting of M.G. Road from Thursday.

"Preparations are under way to begin the work on March 4 evening," said Vijayakumar Haridas, Chief Engineer, BCCC.

However, a source in the corporation said that the work might be delayed by a day due to traffic police clearances and on-field preparatory work.

Asphalting will be carried out on a 2.2 km stretch between Trinity Circle and Cubbon Park Police Station Circle. K. MURALI KUMAR

According to the project details accessed by *The Hindu*, asphalting will be carried out on a 2.2 km stretch between Trinity Circle and Cubbon Park Police Station Circle, with a 15-day deadline to complete the work.

Initial work, including milling, which involves removing the damaged top layer of the road and creating a uniform base for resurfacing, will be taken up in the evenings, after peak hours, to minimise traffic disruption.

An executive engineer from Shantinagar said that the work will be carried out in patches so that even during milling, debris is cleared immediately, ensuring no hindrance to traffic on the next day.

Akshay K., a regular commuter on M.G. Road, said that for many years, only patchwork had been carried out on the stretch, making commuting far from smooth.

"Re-laying the surface is necessary, but the civic body must ensure there are no delays. It is a major link road between different parts of the city. There are very few alternatives. If civic officials allow the work to drag on, which they are known for, traffic disruption will be colossal," he said.

A senior traffic police officer explained that disruption will not be substantial for the first eight to nine days, although minor delays are inevitable.

"In the first phase, milling will be carried out. There will be no diversion, as vehicles can continue to use the milled surface. Only when asphalting begins will we have to divert traffic," the officer said.

Police sources said that although there are alternative routes to M.G. Road, they are also congested during peak hours as they serve as connecting links in central Bengaluru.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 2

Woman killed, 3 rescued after fire breaks out in house

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 53-year-old woman was killed when a fire broke out in a four-storey residential building at Gayatrinagar within Subramanyanagar Police Station limits in Bengaluru on Monday night.

The deceased has been identified as Savitha, wife of Ramesh Babu, a contractor.

According to the police, the fire was reported at around 9 p.m. from the kitchen on the third floor of the building. Mr. Babu lives in a duplex on the third and fourth floors, along with Savitha, his son, and his mother Chinnamma. The first and second floors of the building have been rented out.

The fire was reported from the kitchen on the third floor of the building under Subramanyanagar Police Station limits.

When the fire broke out, Savitha was trapped inside the house, and sustained severe burn injuries, leading to her death. Mr. Babu, his son, and mother, who were also inside the house at the time of the incident, were rescued by fire and emergency personnel, who doused the flames.

The rescued persons were shifted to Manipal Hospital for treatment.

Senior police officials visited the house, along with the Subramanyanagar police.

The exact cause of the fire is yet to be ascertained, and further investigation is under way.

I worked with a baseball coach to improve my power-hitting game

The USA's up-and-coming batter Sanjay, who came up with an impressive display in the T20 showpiece, speaks about how India's triumph in the 2011 ODI World Cup ignited his passion for the game, early days in Bengaluru, the cricketing journey so far, and future plans

R. RAGU

INTERVIEW

Sanjay Krishnamurthi

S. Dipak Ragav

Sanjay Krishnamurthi got hooked to cricket after watching Dhoni's Dashers lift the 2011 ODI World Cup in Mumbai. In a remarkable coincidence, Sanjay made his (T20) World Cup debut 15 years later at the same venue for the USA!

The Arizona-born batter had an interesting journey, growing up in Bengaluru before returning 'home' at the right time as professional cricket was growing in the US. At the ICC 2026 T20 World Cup, Sanjay showed glimpses of his potential with impressive knocks against India and Namibia.

In a chat with *The Hindu*, Sanjay retraces his steps and the road ahead. *Excerpts:*

Describe the experience of playing in the World Cup in India and that first match at the Wankhede?

It was very special because the 2011 World Cup was one of the big moments for me when I really took a liking to cricket. I was very young, but I was watching that on TV. So knowing that I was coming back to that same stadium – as you walk up to the dressing room, there's a photo of the 2011 winning team – was special.

Also, there was a big build-up to that game because, once the fixtures came out sometime in November, I knew I'd be playing India at Wankhede. But when the moment came, it was, I'd say, even more special than I thought it would be.

I didn't feel like the nerves got to me. It still felt like another game of cricket, but when I was standing on the field, you know, during the national anthems and the beginning part of the innings, until I took the catch, I was very, very nervous. Like, what if the ball comes to me?

And then I got the catch (Abhishek Sharma's), and that was when the nerves settled.

Once you play the game, it's special. But then again, after the whole game was done, that night I went back to my hotel, and I was like, yeah, that was cool. Really special.

Let's rewind a little. How did you get initiated into the game?

The first time I noticed cricket was probably when my dad was watching it on his laptop back in the US. That's when I noticed it and asked him to explain the game to me.

Then we came to India for a visit, and he bought me a size 0 tennis-ball bat. So I used to play a little bit with him. Tennis-ball cricket from the age of five, I'd say. And whenever I came back to India, I'd be happy to play with people.

But during the 2011 World Cup, I realised what cricket could be. Because until then, cricket to me was tennis-ball cricket with my dad. It wasn't the scale of a World Cup! That's when I really got excited by it. And then three months later, we moved to India. So that's when I had the opportunity.

From the time we moved into a new apartment in Bangalore (now Bengaluru), I went downstairs and played tennis-ball cricket with the kids. About a month after moving, my dad saw that I really wanted to play cricket, so he enrolled me into a proper academy (J. Arun Kumar Cricket Academy), with a leather ball, and got the full kit and everything.

After a couple of years, we realised that school cricket is very important. So I joined a school (Ebenezer International School) to play cricket. But at the same time, I wanted to focus on my academics. It had a good cricketing culture. (Current) Karnataka (Ranji) batter R. Smaran was my classmate there, and we played together through the age groups.

What are your abiding memories of playing school cricket in Bengaluru?

In school cricket, I used to play as both a bowler and a batter. I started as a left-arm pacer, then changed to left-arm spin, along with opening the batting. I really enjoyed school cricket.

The first big thing for me was Anil Kumble's Spin Stars. There was a statewide trial to try to get spinners. They selected the top 20 spinners based on talent from the ages of 11 to 19. I think I was the youngest one picked at 11. So I got the chance to work on my spin bowling with proper coaching. That's when my parents also realised that I might have something a little bit special compared to others.

After that, I played for Karnataka under-14 probables. I didn't make it into the final 15 as a spinner. Then, in my last year of under-16, I scored many runs for the school. I headed into the season still thinking I'd continue mainly as a left-arm spinner. But I scored many runs and played as a batsman for the State u-16 team.

The year after that, I didn't get picked into the zonals either, even though I had some decent performances at the club level. That's when we heard about the opportunity to come to the US. Since I had a US passport, I would be able to play immediately. So we went to Houston for a trial to try to get into the USA team.

We decided to make it a whole family visit, so the whole family came over. But that's when COVID-19 hit. So we couldn't go back. We just settled there, and it worked out.

How did you adapt to the different training routines in the US compared to what you had in India?

The outdoor facilities, especially at that time, didn't really have turf wickets. There was a lot of astro turf that didn't require maintenance. The indoor facilities were quite good.

In the US, I actually got to play against some better bowlers than I would have in India – like Rusty Theron, who played for South Africa. He was bowling to me when I was 16. Also, Saurabh Netravalkar and others of good quality. So in terms of quality of bowling and training, it was right up there.

Even in games like Minor League Cricket, at 16 I was already playing men's cricket in the US, whereas in India, you're still in the age-group system.

Who were the coaches who made a big impact on your career?

Initially, it was JAK (J. Arun Kumar) *sir*. After that, our school coach, Syed Zabiullah Sir, was very helpful. He's also Smaran's coach. Then there was former Karnataka captain Kartik Jeshwant. He was the one who really helped me think about transforming my game from a defensive batter to an aggressive one.

I was a defensive batter with a very tight technique. I knew where my off stump was and all of that until I played age-grouop cricket for Karnataka. In my first year in the under-16 State team, I didn't really make much of an impact. That's when, during one net session on a tricky wicket that was doing a bit, he said, just go after your shots. Try to hit everything.

I smacked it in that net session. I was middling everything and hitting it hard. That's when he saw something and told me, 'yeah, this is you now'. Ever since then, I have transformed into a power-hitting type of batsman.

How important was it to have the early grounding in India, and how has it helped?

We played a lot of games, which helped. Also, playing mainly longer formats helped build a base. So when I need to get through a tough situation, I can always trust my defence.

To be a successful attacking, power-hitting batsman, you always have to trust your defence at the end of the day, to not get out. Age-group cricket, especially in India, is tough. Many other countries catch up from ages 19 to 23. But I'd say until the age of 19, nobody's tougher than India.

How much of an impact has Major League Cricket had so far?

We were looking forward to Major League Cricket for a while. In the first season, I was there at the draft and saw my name.

I think I was the third-last pick – fourth pick in the rookie round (Under-23 round). I was 19, and I was over the moon. I already knew that Aaron Finch and Marcus Stoinis were signed with that team (San Francisco Unicorns).

In that first season, I enjoyed every moment, even though I didn't play a single game. I worked with Shane Watson and spoke about the mental side of the game. I observed how a fully professional team is run.

I went into the off-season really motivated. I worked a lot on my fitness, the mental side of the game, and power-hitting. I headed into the next season without very high hopes of necessarily getting a game, but ready to make the best of any opportunity.

Then I found out I would be playing every game that season. That's when I had my breakthrough. I scored 79 not out against Washington Freedom. That was when I really felt confident in myself and in my ability to do it against the best.

What were the things that Watson helped you with?

The main thing is that he gave me confidence. He didn't tell me too much that I needed to work on. He just said to keep doing what I was doing and that I was still young and would get better.

The thing that surprised him the most was my power-hitting ability because of my frame. Back then, I was even skinnier. You don't expect someone like that to generate the power to hit sixes. That probably impressed him.

How did you work on your power-hitting game?

I did a lot of tennis-ball practice with my dad. When we moved to California, I worked with a baseball coach. That's where I learned some of the mechanics behind hitting powerfully and using the hips to generate more power.

There were a lot of drop drills and trying to hit sixes. Even in games, I tried to hit sixes. The more you hit sixes, the more you understand what is going to go for six and what isn't. Then you start to figure out your own game.

Can you elaborate a bit on the baseball drills?

It's about rotational power because cricket is a very linear game. Growing up, we are taught to play straight and with a vertical bat. That's what helps you survive. But to generate more power, you want to use your hips and go a little more rotationally. That's something that's coming into the game more now. I found it very easy to connect it. Even though in baseball they swing quite horizontally, he taught me how to generate that same force even with a fairly vertical bat.

Walk us through your knock against Namibia, your first T20I half-century and the Player-of-the-Match award?

It was special. In the previous three games, I thought I played well against India, but I didn't get a bigger score. I wasn't thinking about personal performances, though. Even heading into that game, it was about getting the team as many runs as possible.

As I walked in, our captain, Monank Patel, who was walking out, told me to just play my game and play freely. I went in playing freely. Any ball in my zone, I was ready to hit for six from the beginning. Off the third ball, I got one I felt I could hit for six, so I decided to go for it. When I had my match-up against the left-arm spinner and the left-arm pacer, I decided to tee off, and it came off that day.

Do you feel this tournament and what you have shown could open the door to a possible IPL deal?

Obviously, the IPL is the pinnacle of franchise cricket, so I would absolutely love to play in it someday, but I don't think about selections too much, as they're out of my control, so I'll continue to take it one game at a time.

What is the road ahead for you? What are your near-term targets and the areas you will be focusing on?

I'd say a few near-term targets are to deliver match-winning performances against full member teams and play as much franchise cricket as I can across different countries, which will allow me to continue developing my game.

A couple of exciting tournaments on the horizon are the 2027 ODI World Cup and the 2028 LA Games.

How regulatory gaps turn sanitation work deadly

Workers argue that they are acknowledged through welfare schemes and symbolic measures, but long-term structural reform such as mechanisation, and guaranteed income security remains missing

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

In May 2025, a septic pit attached to a house in Tavarekere village in Sira taluk, Tumakuru, had to be emptied after 12 years. A suction machine operator quoted ₹20,000, saying the hardened sludge would take hours to remove. The house owner, an employee at a government hospital, instead contacted Rangappa, a 55-year-old agricultural labourer who occasionally undertook pit cleaning work in the area. He and two other daily wage labourers agreed to do the work for ₹7,500.

On May 26 and 27, the three entered the nearly eight-foot pit and removed the waste. By the evening of May 27, Rangappa developed breathlessness. Over the next week, his family took him to six hospitals. The family spent close to ₹70,000. Rangappa, who was not recorded as a manual scavenger, died at home on June 2. An FIR was registered on the same day at the Tavarekere police station.

Under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, a manual scavenger is defined as a person engaged in manually cleaning human excreta from an 'insanitary latrine, railway track or other notified spaces' before the excreta decomposes. FILE PHOTO

Grey zone

Under the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013, a manual scavenger is defined as a person engaged in manually cleaning human excreta from an "insanitary latrine, railway track or other notified spaces" before the excreta decomposes.

However, Siddarth J., a member of Safai Karmachari Kavalu Samithi (SKKS), said septic tanks and pits – which require periodic emptying – fall into a grey zone. The definitional distinction has created what he describe as a "regulatory" gap. When a person dies cleaning an insanitary latrine, the case falls squarely under the Act. When a person dies inside a septic tank or pit, it is categorised as "hazardous cleaning". The distinction determines not only how the death is recorded, but also what relief, if any, the family can access. The classification decides whether the death is recognised as a violation of a prohibited practice or treated as an "occupational" accident, he explained.

The human cost of sanitation

No entitlements

Families like Rangappa's, therefore, find themselves outside the narrow framing of "identified manual scavengers". Without identification, statutory entitlements become inaccessible. Under Section 13(1)(b) of the Act, identified manual scavengers are entitled to ₹40,000 as initial cash assistance, followed by skill development training and financial support for alternative livelihoods. In cases like Rangappa's, however, even this limited assistance is not there.

Former workers argue that even where compensation is disbursed, it does little to provide security. "While rehabilitation frameworks focus on skill development, self-employment, and livelihood transition, these measures are more accessible to younger workers. Older workers struggle to access loans, complete training programmes, or secure alternative employment," said Matla Baba, 63, a former sanitation worker. "By the time one reaches 40, many fall outside the practical scope of rehabilitation schemes. The work had already drained us mentally and physically," he added.

Mechanisation norms

Officials from the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department, pointing out that the State has recognised the need for mechanised management of septic tanks, said norms have been prescribed for gram panchayats to procure suction machines based on population and own-source revenue.

Under these norms, gram panchayats with a population above 7,000 and annual own revenue exceeding ₹30 lakh must purchase at least one suction machine. Smaller panchayats are expected to form clusters with other panchayats to share a machine.

The framework acknowledges that septic tanks and pits require mechanised cleaning. Yet in many rural areas, gram panchayats do not own suction machines. Private operators fill the gap and charge high rates.

In urban areas, the regulatory framework also emphasises formalisation of sanitation work. In February, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) made it mandatory for all private agencies and vehicles engaged in cleaning manholes and sewage treatment plants (STPs) to register with BWSSB by March 7.

The notification instructed owners of commercial buildings, residential complexes, group houses, and private plots that they would be directly responsible if any accidents occurred during cleaning by unregistered or unauthorised personnel.

Despite these regulations, workers argue that they are acknowledged through welfare schemes and symbolic measures, but long-term structural reform such as mechanisation, strict enforcement, and guaranteed income security remains missing.

(Series concluded)

During the lunar eclipse

The usually busy Town Hall junction is seen with lesser traffic in the evening hours on Tuesday; members of Moodanambike Virodhi Okkoota (Anti-Superstition Federation) hosting a food festival challenging food taboos and promoting scientific thinking at Town Hall in Bengaluru on Tuesday; B.R. Guruprasad, Director, Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium, Bengaluru, explaining the live stages of lunar eclipse at C.V. Vishveshwara Auditorium in Bengaluru on Tuesday. K. MURALI KUMAR

HC directs State to make policy for accurate content management on govt. websites

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

As an "old and outdated information lacking statutory backing" retained by the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) on its website had lead to confusion over status of a facility, the High Court of Karnataka has directed the State government to formulate a comprehensive policy to ensure that all contents on official websites is accurate, current and consistent with the law.

"Public authorities must recognise that any representation made on an official website carries weight and authority. Even if such material does not have statutory force, it influences public conduct. Inconsistent or outdated information can undermine public confidence and give rise to allegations of arbitrariness or unfairness," the court observed.

Justice Suraj Govindaraj issued the directions while dismissing a petition filed in 2016 by Jain International Residential School raising certain disputes over correctness of levy of water charges.

The petitioner-school had also claimed concession in charges under classification as 'educational institution' relying on customer charter document uploaded on the BWSSB's official website in this regard. However, the BWSSB had told the court that the it was "an outdated guidance document uploaded in 2005 without statutory force" and the court said that petitioner could not get benefit from non-statutory backed information uploaded on the website.

Meanwhile, the court also directed the BWSSB to regularly review contents on its website, ensure accuracy of contents and remove or correct any outdated or misleading material without delay.

With regard to dispute over computation of prorata water and sanitary charges, the court allowed the petitioner to file appeal before the statutory authorities as per the provisions of BWSSB Act, 1964, within 60 days while asking authorities to decide the appeal as per the law.

When a statutory body publishes a customer charter or similar document on its official website, the public is entitled to assume that the contents correctly reflect the applicable legal position, the court said while pointing out that the distinction between a statutory regulation and an administrative document may be clear to lawyers, but it is not apparent to a layman. Therefore, the court said, "If the website contains information that does not strictly align with the statutory regulations, it can create genuine confusion."

The court emphasised the critical role official websites of the State government's various departments, boards, corporations, the statutory authorities play in the modern governance landscape, while pointing out that for a large number of citizens, the official websites are primary, and often only source of information.

Three months

Directing the Secretary, e-Governance Department, to formulate a policy in three months, the court said that it should have a system of prior legal vetting before uploading any documents related to statutory rights or obligations; prescribed fees, charges, classifications, penalties, or entitlements; or interpretations or explains of provision of an Act, Rules, or Regulations.

The policy should state that every informational or explanatory document hosted on official websites carry a standardised disclaimer stating that in the event of any inconsistency, the relevant statutory provisions shall prevail, the court said.

Besides, the policy should have provision for annual digital content audits by each department; certification by the head of the department that the website content is updated and consistent with current law; and a system of version control and archival tracking, the court said.

The court said that the policy should have facility to allow citizens to point out discrepancies, a designated officer responsible for website content in each department, a defined protocol for correction of errors; and timelines for rectification once discrepancies are noticed.

From Page One

Brace for traffic snarls as M.G. Road to be asphalted

Earlier, the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) had planned to replace pipelines along M.G. Road, but a source in the board informed *The Hindu* that the plan has been dropped after the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) revised its proposal.

"Since the pipelines were laid about 40 years ago, we planned to replace them while the white-topping work was under way. But, the white-topping work part of the project was scrapped, and GBA is only asphalting the road, which will be completed in a lesser time frame. Our work will take longer than that. Hence, we dropped our proposal. In any case, no major pipelines run through the stretch," said a BWSSB official.

Earlier, the GBA had planned to white-top M.G. Road, and entrusted the work to BSMILE. However, traffic police denied permission to work for an extended period, as they could not rely on alternative routes for long, considering the high vehicle density on M.G. Road. Bengaluru Traffic Police said it would bring traffic in the heart of the city to a standstill. The project was later transferred to BCCC from the special purpose vehicle.

India ahead of U.S. and China in linking climate change to health risks in news coverage: Study

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Indian news outlets carry the highest proportion of substantive climate-health coverage among India, the United States and China, according to a study published in *The Lancet Planetary Health* journal. However, the researchers caution that overall coverage of linking climate change and public health remains extremely limited across all three countries.

The study finds that the most frequently discussed health impacts included extreme heat, extreme weather events, such as floods and storms, pollution, and broader public health risks. FILE PHOTO

The study, titled *The evolution of news coverage about climate change as a health issue - a decadal analysis in China, India, and the USA*, was co-authored by Professor Deepti Ganapathy, Visiting Assistant Professor of Management Communication at Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIM-B), along with international collaborators.

The study analyses how leading newspapers in the world's three largest carbon-emitting nations have covered the health impact of climate change over an 11-year period from 2012 to 2023.

Drawing from a dataset of more than 22.5 million newspaper articles published during the time period, the researchers first identified stories that mentioned climate change. These accounted for just 0.3% of the total corpus.

From this subset, articles that also referred to health were further screened and manually coded to assess whether they substantively discussed climate change as a public health issue rather than making a passing reference.

The results show that fewer than 0.1% of all published articles across the three countries over the 11 years provided substantive coverage of climate change in relation to health. Even among climate-focused stories, explicit discussion of health impact was uncommon. However, within this limited pool of coverage, Indian newspapers stood out.

In a validated sample, 46.4% of Indian articles that mentioned both climate change and health were found to substantively frame the issue through a public health lens. This compares with 31.3% in the United States and 17% in China.

The study found that the most frequently discussed health impacts included extreme heat, extreme weather events, such as floods and storms, air pollution, food insecurity, and broader public health risks.

Indian coverage was more likely to connect climate change to everyday lived experiences, including heatwaves, agricultural stress and urban air quality.

At the same time, the researchers observed gaps across all three countries. Reporting often lacked detailed engagement with vulnerable populations, medical or public health experts, and evidence-based adaptation or mitigation strategies.

The authors note that positioning climate change as a health issue rather than only as an environmental or political topic can make it more personally relevant, and potentially strengthen public engagement and policy action.

The authors noted that while India shows relatively stronger integration of health framing within climate change reporting, substantial gaps remain globally, and suggested that clearer, more consistent reporting on health risks and solutions could help bridge the gap between climate science and public understanding.

Why India needs to radically rethink its doctoral education programmes

India faces many real-world problems that could benefit from high-quality PhD research, these issues span public health, agriculture, sustainability, digital inclusion, and education and the question is whether our current systems support and encourage studies grounded in what the people need

Biju Dharmapalan

The recent announcement that China awarded its first "practical Ph.Ds", doctoral degrees conferred for tangible products rather than traditional research papers, is a timely catalyst for a long-overdue conversation on the relevance, design, and culture of Ph.D. education in India. In China's new model, doctoral candidates are evaluated on working prototypes and real-world applications instead of lengthy theses and publication counts.

This shift recognises applied innovation on par with scholarly writing and challenges the deeply rooted academic paradigm in which a Ph.D. is almost synonymous with a long thesis and a suite of published papers. Our universities should ask themselves whether we need to evaluate a thesis based on the number of papers a scholar has produced or if we need to focus on the societal relevance of the work.

Academic malaise

One major difficulty students interested in research in India face is the prolongation of the Ph.D. In many universities, there are students who have spent more than three years; in some cases, students spend eight. Even though there are many issues with delays in Ph.D. work, most instances are due to delays in publishing. In several departments, progress is judged less by the depth of original insight and more by the number of papers indexed in certain databases and the reputational clout of journals in which they appear. This culture undervalues the quality and relevance of research.

While publication is undeniably a pillar of academic excellence, the current fixation on having multiple indexed papers for a degree to be considered completed can encourage superficial research that may not push disciplinary boundaries or address pressing real-world problems.

It also intensifies the pressure on students to chase journals – any journals – that will accept their work, inadvertently fuelling unethical practices like engaging with predatory journals.

Scholars' plight

In most labs, Ph.D. scholars are treated as labour that supervisors can take for granted. Supervisors exploit the scholars in the name of publication, by prolonging their stay in the lab, so that supervisors don't lose a good student trained in the domain. To maintain their labs, many supervisors also exploit their scholars by offering them the dream of publishing well, which, in reality, is mainly needed for the supervisors' appraisals.

In many universities, Ph.D. theses are measured by the number of pages, often running beyond 200. There is a misconception that the quality of work is directly proportional to this number. FILE PHOTO

This culture is further aggravated by paid publications and dubious journals that promise quick indexing and impact metrics for a fee. Such outlets capitalise on the intense pressure on students to publish, thus creating a shortcut that erodes academic integrity. Though many Indian institutions now require papers to be published in indexed journals, the quality and relevance of these outlets vary widely, and the indexing status itself is frequently commodified by publishers. Ultimately, most doctoral research focuses solely on the university's administrative needs, lacking scientific rigour or societal significance.

Hurdles with theses

In many universities, Ph.D. theses are measured by the number of pages, often running beyond 200. There is a misconception that the quality of work is directly proportional to this number. History shows that even Nobel Prize-winning theses can span only a few pages. When one can concisely explain their research work, expanding it to occupy many pages just because that's the norm is absurd.

The compulsion to write lengthy theses has led scholars to waste time and energy on introductions and inflated literature reviews. Many leading universities across the globe are moving towards compact dissertations that prioritise contributions over volume.

A major structural impediment in India's Ph.D. environment is the conventional thesis-defence model and long-lasting bureaucratic procedures. When they complete their studies, students have to deal with extended timelines to submit their theses, have them evaluated, and finally complete their oral defence. Administrative delays can further extend the final phases of a Ph.D. by months, and in rare instances, even years, irrespective of the candidate's productivity or the study's significance.

An important criticism of India's existing Ph.D. system is that a lot of doctoral research isn't very useful to society as many theses are still preserved in academic archives

For exceptional researchers who have produced significant ideas, potentially creating technologies or therapies with societal relevance, being constrained by prolonged review cycles diminishes the fundamental objective of doctoral studies.

Relevance of doctoral work

An important criticism of India's existing Ph.D. system is that a lot of doctoral research isn't very useful to society. Many theses are still preserved in academic archives and don't often help with public policy, new ideas in business or the health of communities. In many universities, copies of Ph.D. theses are just dumped in a room or a backyard.

A Ph.D. should not be a solitary intellectual pursuit but rather a conduit between profound investigation and significant influence. China's practical Ph.D. model seeks to bridge this gap by matching doctoral outputs with real-world applications and industrial scalability, including welding technology for firefighting systems, and is assessed by panels comprising both academics and industry professionals.

India faces many real-world problems that could benefit from high-quality Ph.D. research. These issues span public health, agriculture, sustainability, digital inclusion, and education. The question is whether our current systems support and encourage studies grounded in what the people need.

Indian universities should brainstorm ways to reform the structure of Ph.D. education to better suit the current world. The age-old practice of spending long years for a Ph.D. doesn't hold any merit in a digital world. Similarly, the structure and evaluation of the thesis should focus on the innovation it describes and its relevance rather than on the number of papers it produced. Just a mushrooming number of Ph.D. holders does no good for the nation; India also needs good quality work that can support nation-building and humankind.

(Biju Dharmapalan is the dean, Academic Affairs, at Garden City University, Bengaluru, and an adjunct faculty member at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru. bijudharmapalan@gmail.com)

THE GIST

- In China's new model of 'practical Ph.Ds', doctoral candidates are evaluated on working prototypes and real-world applications instead of lengthy theses and publication counts
- One major difficulty students interested in research in India face is the prolongation of the Ph.D which is mainly due to delays in publishing.
- The compulsion to write lengthy theses has led scholars to waste time and energy on introductions and inflated literature reviews
- A major structural impediment in India's Ph.D. environment is the conventional thesis-defence model and long-lasting bureaucratic procedures

BIG SHOT

A picture taken on February 27, 2026, shows a solar power tower at Atlantica Yield solar plant in Sanlucar La Mayor in Spain. The tower is surrounded by curved mirrors that reflect sunlight to a point on its top, where a medium like water or molten salts store the heat. AFP

WHAT IS IT?

Megamaser: cosmic light show

Vasudevan Mukunth

Last, astronomers reported finding the most distant hydroxyl maser yet using the MeerKAT telescope. A hydroxyl megamaser is a giant and naturally occurring laser found in deep space. Just as a regular laser focuses visible light into a concentrated beam, a maser focuses microwave or radio waves.

The 'hydroxyl' part refers to a simple molecule made of one oxygen atom and one hydrogen atom (OH^-). These molecules float in large clouds of gas within distant galaxies. When two galaxies collide, the impact triggers intense star formation and feeds giant black holes, and also releases massive amounts of infrared energy.

When this energy strikes the hydroxyl molecules, it pumps them into a high-energy state. As the molecules settle back down, they release a powerful, amplified beam of radio waves. Astronomers call these signals megamasers because they shine millions of times brighter than the smaller masers found in our own Milky Way galaxy.

Astronomers treat these beams as cosmic beacons. Because the radio waves can travel through thick dust, scientists can study them to reveal where they came from and how they could've been produced, even if the source is obscured. In turn, they can measure how fast galaxies are moving and better understand the evolution of the universe.

The megamaser IRAS 16399-0937, located 370 million lightyears away from the earth. ESA/HUBBLE, NASA

This newfound megamaser is from a galaxy billions of lightyears away. A natural cosmic lens magnified its emission, making it the brightest ever seen and earning it the moniker 'gigamaser'.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to **science@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Daily page'

Interstate mobile theft: 14 phones worth ₹9L recovered

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Two interstate offenders involved in a series of mobile phone thefts have been arrested by the Whitefield police. The police also recovered 14 stolen mobile phones worth approximately ₹9 lakh from them.

The case was registered on January 24, 2026, following a complaint by a Mahadevapura resident. He stated that on January 23 at around 9.25 p.m., he boarded a BMTC bus from Brigade Innovation Zone to Whitefield. By the time the bus reached Hope Farm Signal at around 10 p.m., he realised that his iPhone 15 Plus had been stolen.

The police apprehended two suspects within an hour of registering the case. During interrogation, the duo allegedly confessed to stealing phones from passengers in BMTC buses. They admitted to committing thefts during a live music concert held here on January 23.

On January 25, both accused were remanded to judicial custody.

A third accused is absconding and is reportedly hiding in New Delhi.

East Corporation faces park deficit despite wealth

East Corporation has only 35 parks, compared with an average of over 300 in other corporations

K.V. Aditya Bharadwaj
BENGALURU

Bengaluru East City Corporation, which houses the city's IT corridor, is not only the richest of the five corporations, but also the largest in area. However, it woefully lags in lung spaces. It has only 35 parks, compared with an average of over 300 parks in other corporations. While occupying 23.5% of the city's civic area, the East Corporation has only 2.5% of the city's parks.

This data clearly indicates the deeper rot of unplanned and unregulated development on the city's south-eastern outskirts, since the late 1990s, to accommodate the IT corridor and its housing needs.

In layouts developed by both government agencies and private players, 15% of the area has to be earmarked for parks and playgrounds, which has led to so many parks in the core city areas. However, development in the IT corridor is dominated by apartments and gated communities, most of them unplanned. This is cited as one of the main reasons for the lack of public parks in the East Corporation.

Erstwhile Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike had proposed to create Cubbon Park and Lalbagh-like lung spaces in the outer zones, but none of them took off the ground.

Jagadish Reddy, of Varthur Rising, said that the Mahadevapura Assembly Constituency had around 14,000 acres of government-owned land as per revenue records, which could be developed into parks and playgrounds to offer a quality of life to the citizens of these areas. "But there is neither such a vision nor political will. Instead, large chunks of these government lands have been encroached upon and developed," he said, highlighting the struggle to protect the Kadugodi forest and plantation land.

Jagadish Reddy, of Varthur Rising, said forest patches in the Corporation area have to be developed into tree parks and fenced with access control mechanisms to prevent garbage dumping.

While occupying 23.5% of the city's civic area, the East Corporation has only 2.5% of the city's parks

He said forest patches in the Corporation area have to be developed into tree parks and properly fenced with access control mechanisms to prevent garbage dumping. "This will preserve these forest patches and provide park-like spaces to the citizens," he said.

D.S. Ramesh, Commissioner, East Corporation, said there are no proposals to create new parks, but the focus is on redeveloping the existing parks. "While we have very few parks, due to a legacy issue with planning, we are blessed with 46 lakes, including the largest lakes of the city, like Bellanadur Lake and Varthur Lake. We are focusing on rejuvenating them, so that they can act as both public spaces and lung spaces," he said.

Parks & lakes in city's corporations

City Corporation	Area (in sq. km)	Number of parks	Number of lakes
North	158	336	39
South	147	304	63
Central	78	210	5
West	161	468	49
East	168	35	46
Total	712	1,353	202

Garbage woes, building violations take centre stage at East Corporation meeting

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chaos swept through the Bengaluru East City Corporation (BECC) office on Tuesday during the public interaction with Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) chief M. Maheshwar Rao, as a big crowd gathered for the event grew impatient waiting for their turn. More than 200 people gathered at the BECC head office at Mahadevapura, and the issues raised were largely about building violations, e-khata issues, poor footpath stretches, solid waste management, and illegal constructions.

A resident of AECS Layout drew Mr. Rao's attention to the irregularity of waste collection tippers and said, "Waste collection is happening only once a week, forcing residents to throw garbage on the streets, which is making walking impossible." The same issue was raised by at least eight residents from the area, with one person asking the corporation to give them poison instead of killing them slowly by spreading diseases through garbage pile-ups.

During the central corporation meeting, Mr. Rao acknowledged the irregular timings and issues with door-to-door garbage collection. He asked the health officer to conduct field visits, prepare an extensive report, and submit it to the GBA. The authority will then seek accountability from the officials concerned. He directed corporation officials to come up with a micro-plan to address the garbage issue in T.C. Palya and other areas where the issue is persisting.

Mr. Rao also directed officials to make it mandatory for buildings with more than two floors to place two large dustbins for dry and wet waste. The idea behind the move is to encourage source segregation and curb illegal dumping, leading to a reduction in black spots. Residents of Garudacharapalya, Kundalahalli, and those living along ECC Road complained about illegal buildings, PG accommodations, and buildings under construction that are violating rules. Mr. Rao asked officials to strictly conduct manual checks, issue notices, and get parastatal agencies to snap electricity and water connections to violators. He instructed officials to hold quick hearings, and if the cases are found to be genuine, connections can be restored.

Prakash, a resident of Kadugodi, noted that there is rampant encroachment of gomala land in patches near Channasandra. Mr. Rao ordered officials to immediately reclaim the land and monitor other encroachments. Prakash also submitted a bundle of letters to Mr. Rao that he had written to the civic body over the years highlighting the issue.

Other major issues highlighted by residents included the direct discharge of waste into stormwater drains by apartment complexes in east Bengaluru, leading to pollution of Bhoganahalli Lake. Residents also pointed to rampant encroachment of public spaces by food carts near the ITPL back gate and alleged drug peddling at the same location.

Mr. Rao also learned that no ward meetings have been held in the corporation since the GBA transition and ordered strict conduct of ward meetings. He further directed officials to develop footpaths by setting targets for all executive engineers.

Man stabbed to death over trivial row at hotel in city

BENGALURU: A 35-year-old man, identified as Shashikumar, was stabbed to death at a hotel in Basaveshwara Nagar on Monday night. According to the police, the incident occurred at Sri Raghavendra Veg Dosa Corner. The two men, identified as Manjunath and Bhagyaraj alias Papu, allegedly quarreled with the victim over him accidentally stepping on one accused's foot. They allegedly attacked him with a sharp weapon, and he died on the spot. They fled immediately.Efforts to trace them are on.

Road rage: One dead

The Hindu Bureau
SHIVAMOGGA

A 24-year-old youth died and two others suffered injuries in a road rage incident at Suranahalli in Holenarasipur taluk of Hassan district on Monday. The deceased has been identified as S.K. Manu. His relatives Abhishek and Rakesh suffered injuries.

The trio were in front of their house when a car passed by at high speed. When they told the driver to slow down, he took a u-turn and allegedly ploughed into them, before fleeing. A probe has been launched.

NLC India Limited
('Navratna' - Government of India Enterprise)
Regd. Office: No.135, EVR Periyar High Road, Kilpauk, Chennai 600 010
Corporate Office: Block-1, Neyveli - 607 801, Cuddalore District, Tamil Nadu.
CIN: L93090TN1956GOI003507. Website : www.nlcindia.in

Advt.No: 04/2026
ENGAGEMENT OF AIRPORT DIRECTOR ON FIXED TERM EMPLOYMENT (FTE) BASIS

NLC India Limited (NLCIL), a premier 'NAVRATNA' Public Sector Enterprise invites applications from eligible candidates for Engagement of Airport Director on FTE basis for a period of two years.

Name of the post (FTE)	Grade (FTE)	No. of vacancy
Airport Director	F6-E	1

For Detailed Information on Eligibility Criteria, Post Qualification Work Experience, Important Dates, Online Application, Upper Age Limit, Selection Process etc., please refer detailed advertisement to be released shortly in careers page of NLCIL Website "www.nlcindia.in".

THE HINDU
OPPORTUNITIES

GENERAL

INVITATION FOR APPLICATION
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
CHENNAI

Higginbothams Pvt. Ltd., a member of Amalgamations Group, India's oldest and most respected bookstore, invites applications for the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The ideal candidate will have 15+ years of senior leadership experience, preferably in retail, publishing, e-commerce, or consumer-facing industries, with a strong ability to drive growth, digital transformation, and strategic leadership, while preserving the organisation's rich heritage.

This position reports to the Board of Directors.

Interested candidates may apply to:
gautam@higginbothams.co.in

V.O.Chidambaranar Port Authority
General Administration Department, Tuticorin
(An Autonomous Body under MoPSW, GoI)
GAD-EST10ESTC(COMI)/1/2026-GAD Date:04.03.2026

V.O. Chidambaranar Port Authority invites applications for the following Posts:-
Direct Recruitment on regular basis:

Sl.No.	Class	Name of the posts	Scale of Pay (in Rs.)	No. of. Post
1.	Class - I	Law Officer Gr.I	50000-160000	1
2.	Class-1	Assistant Director (Research)	50000-160000	1
3.	Class - II	Fire Cum Assistant Safety Officer	40000-140000	1

Detailed advertisement will be published in VOC Port's website www.vocport.gov.in on 10.03.2026.

Sd/-
SECRETARY

HLL Lifecare Limited
(A Government of India Enterprise)
CIN: U25193 KL 1966 GOI 002621
Corporate & Regd. Office: Poojappura, Thiruvananthapuram-695 012, Kerala

RECRUITMENT OF PROFESSIONALS
HLL invites application for the following positions on **fixed term contract basis**.

Role	Location(s)	Vacancies
Associate Manager (Medical Diagnostics Services)	Kozhikode, Ernakulum and Bangalore	3
MR Assistant	Thiruvananthapuram	1

Apply Online : www.lifecarehll.com/careers
Last Date for Submission of Application : **18.03.2026**
स्वस्थ पीढ़ियों के लिए नवान्वेषण | Innovating for Healthy Generations

#JES4NEET JHA'S EDUCATIONAL SERVICES #JES4NEET
FOR NEET & IISER

CAREERS AT
JHA'S EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
Excellence in NEET & IISER Preparation (Pune's Leading Institute)

We invite passionate, competent professionals to join our core team for the following roles:
- **Classroom Managers**
- **Front Office Counsellors (Female candidates preferred)**
- **Librarians (Female candidates preferred)**
- **Event Managers**

We offer a professional, growth-oriented environment with compensation commensurate with talent and experience. (JES operates from a single, focused campus - no branches.)
Location: Ghole Road, Pune

Interested candidates may share their resume at smitadm@gmail.com

अखिल भारतीय आयुर्विज्ञान संस्थान (अ.भा.आ.सं.), भुवनेश्वर
ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), BHUBANESWAR
(A Statutory body under aegis of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India)
Sijua, Post-Dumuduma, Bhubaneswar (Odisha) -751019
F.No.: TEM-12/13/2025-TEM DEPT/21631 Date: 02.03.2026

RECRUITMENT NOTICE FOR ENGAGEMENT OF MANPOWER ON CONTRACTUAL BASIS FOR OPERATIONALISATION AND MAINTENANCE OF BHISHM CUBES.

BHISHM CUBES are developed and manufactured under the AAROGYA MAITRI PROJECT, which represents a significant advancement in emergency medical response and disaster management capabilities. BHISHM Cubes is tailored to treat up to 200 casualties, emphasizing rapid response and comprehensive care, and it is equipped with several innovative tools designed to enhance disaster response and medical support during emergency times and at the times of disasters/ public health emergencies. The Human Resource engaged under the project are funded by the Disaster Management Cell of MoHFW, GoI at AIIMS Bhubaneswar for operationalization & maintenance of BHISHM Cubes during peace time and at the time of Disaster/Public Health emergencies.

Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for the recruitment of the following posts on **purely Contractual Basis** as under-

S.L.	Name of Post	Monthly Remuneration (Consolidated)	Age Limit	No. of Post & Category
1	Pharmacist	₹40,000/- Per month	Up to 35 years	UR-01
2	Technician	₹40,000/- Per month	Up to 35 years	UR-01
3	Data Entry Operator	₹30,000/- Per month	Up to 35 years	UR-01

For details of advertisement including educational qualifications, age and eligibility criteriaetc., kindly visit the Institute's website:**https://aiimsbhubaneswar.nic.in/recruitment-notice/**

Sd/-
Md. Salim Golder
Administrative Officer,
AIIMS, Bhubaneswar

GENERAL

Mahatma Gandhi University
P.D. Hills, Athirampuzha, Kottayam - 686560. Ph: 0481 - 2731007
67435/AD A2-1/2024/AD A2 (Part 1) 28.02.2026

NOTIFICATION **FACULTY RECRUITMENT**

Online applications are invited from eligible candidates for appointment as Associate Professor in the School Of Pedagogical Sciences and Assistant Professor in the various Schools of Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam, Kerala. **Qualifications:** As per UGC Regulations 2018

Sl. No.	Posts	Department	No. of posts
1	Associate Professor	School of Pedegogical Sciences	1
2	Assistant Professor	Various Schools of Mahatma Gandhi University	9

Last date for the submission of online application: March 31, 2026
PRO/1/Advt/35/2025-26 Sd/- Registrar
For more details: **www.facultyrecruitment.mgu.ac.in**

ADITYA UNIVERSITY
www.adityauniversity.in

YES, WE ARE **HIRING**
We are seeking research-active and self-motivated faculty members with a strong commitment to quality teaching, and meaningful contribution to the holistic development.

Professors, Assoc. Professors & Asst. Professors

School of Engineering
- Electronics and Communication Engg.
- Computer Science and Engineering
- Information Technology
- Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning
- Data Science
- Master of Computer Applications

School of Business
- Digital Marketing
- Business Analytics
- Human Resources
- Finance

School of Sciences
- Forensic Chemistry & Toxicology
- Forensic Physics & Ballistics
- Cyber Security & Digital Forensics
- Questioned Document & Fingerprint Sci.
- Forensic Biology, Serology and DNA Fingerprinting

School of Pharmacy
- Pharmacognosy
- Pharmaceutical Chemistry
- Pharmacy Practice/Pharm D
- Pharmaceutical Analysis

Qualifications and Salary: As per UGC / AICTE norms.
- Preference will be given to candidates with academic credentials from IITs, NITs, IIMs, and reputed Central/Foreign Universities.
- Candidates from non-CSE specializations who possess relevant certifications and demonstrate the capability to teach courses in Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning (AI & ML), Data Science, and Programming Languages are also encouraged to apply.
- Strong support is provided through incentives and seed grants to promote research excellence and innovation.
- **Staff Welfare :** Staff Quarters, Free Transport, Medical Insurance, Subsidized School/College Education to Children.

Apply on or before 15-03-2026 @ http://adityauniversity.in/careers
Surampalem, Kakinada Dist., AP - 533 437.
For Inquiry: 90002 76662 95500 66914

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Flights cancelled at 4 Indian airports amid West Asia conflict

250 Since February 28, Indian airlines have scrapped 1,117 international services as disruptions continue. As many as 80 flights were cancelled at the Delhi airport while 107 services were cancelled at the Mumbai airport. At Bengaluru, at least 42 flights were cancelled and Chennai airport said 30 flights were cancelled. PTI

Number of Iranians killed in the U.S. and Israeli attacks

787 The Iranian Red Crescent said that more than 780 people have been killed nationwide since the U.S. and Israel started striking Iran. It said strikes since Saturday had hit 153 cities and more than 500 locations across Iran in more than 1,000 attacks. Separately on Tuesday, loud explosions were heard in Tehran, while Iranian media reported blasts in Karaj. AFP

Marginalised beneficiaries of T.N. govt.'s special fund

37.79 In lakh. The government of Tamil Nadu has credited a special fund of ₹2,000 to the bank accounts of 37.79 lakh people. Responding to requests for support for the elderly, widows, and persons with disabilities, the government has provided ₹2,000 over and above the existing monthly pensions, Mr. Stalin said. PTI

The increase in breast cancer cases in India since 1990

477 In per cent. India has recorded a nearly 500% rise in breast cancer cases between 1990 and 2023, according to a study published in *The Lancet Oncology*. The study also found a 352% increase in deaths from the disease over the same period. The impact of the disease was not standard across the globe, with low and middle income nations more affected. PTI

Number of civilians killed in Afghanistan in conflict with Pakistan

42 Between February 26 and March 2, at least 42 civilians have been killed and 104 wounded in Afghanistan in the fighting with Pakistan. The military conflict between the neighbours has entered its sixth day. Afghanistan said it had captured another Pakistani post in the Kandahar region. REUTERS

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

Follow us facebook.com/thehindu X.com/the_hindu instagram.com/the_hindu

On India's fighter jet acquisitions

The procurement of the Rafale jets is not just fleet expansion. It is a structural shift in how India positions itself within global defence hierarchies. Securing access to mission software and autonomy to integrate weapons in fighter aircraft is central to advancing India's efforts to indigenise defence development.

FULL CONTEXT

Deepanshu Mohan

India's Defence Acquisition Council recently cleared the procurement of 114 Rafale fighter jets from Dassault Aviation. The deal is valued at approximately Rs 3.25 lakh crore.

What followed was a recent visit of French President Emmanuel Macron to India for the A.I. Summit where he committed to 'technology transfer' which can significantly elevate the defence capabilities of New Delhi.

Though, this comes with a caveat, reports suggest that France has firmly denied the sharing of the critical source codes which will greatly hamper India's autonomy in customising the software systems and integrating sensors and radar systems.

This will limit New Delhi's attempt in indigenising the operations of the Indian Air Force squadron 'Golden Arrows'. This might also not be the only hiccup India faces in re-positioning itself in the defence hierarchy.

Indian Air Force's (IAF) Rafale aircrafts perform a flypast during the 77th Republic Day Parade, in New Delhi. PTI

THE GIST

India's Defence Acquisition Council recently cleared the procurement of 114 Rafale fighter jets from Dassault Aviation. The deal is valued at approximately Rs 3.25 lakh crore.

France has positioned 'Make in India' as central to the partnership. But technology transfer faces a critical constraint since access to source codes for electronic warfare and radar systems remains restricted.

In India, indigenous value-add in major licensed production platforms has historically ranged between 25–35%, concentrated in structural manufacturing rather than mission systems. Without deepening subsystem ownership, domestic content targets risk remaining assembly heavy.

Limited technology transfer

The Indian Air Force operates 29 fighter squadrons against an authorised strength of 42. The MiG-21 fighter jets retired in September 2025 after 62 years. Pakistan maintains around 25 squadrons. China fields around 65. Operation Sindoor in May 2025 exposed this vulnerability through the largest beyond-visual-range engagement in the region's history.

That reality underpins the Rafale procurement. Of the 114 aircraft, 18 will arrive in fly-away condition. The remaining 96 will be manufactured in India, with indigenous content targeted at 30% initially and 60% eventually.

Tata Advanced Systems has signed agreements with Dassault to manufacture four fuselage sections in Hyderabad, delivering up to 24 fuselages annually from the fiscal year 2028.

The question is whether assembly translates to autonomy. In defence aerospace, geoeconomic leverage is measurable.

It lies in the proportion of domestic value-add, control over mission software, freedom to integrate third-party weapons, and autonomy over lifecycle upgrades all of which now seems to be in jeopardy. Assembly depth without design authority alters production geography but not bargaining power.

France has positioned 'Make in India' as central to the partnership. But technology transfer faces a critical constraint. While Dassault will co-produce the airframe and Safran M88 engines, access to source codes for electronic warfare and radar systems remains restricted. This limits India's ability to independently integrate indigenous weapons.

Software defines modern warfare. Every modification without source code access requires bilateral clearance and outlays to foreign contractors.

India's experience with Mirage 2000 upgrades illustrates this, where French vendor dependency added over €1 billion in integration costs across 50 aircraft since 2011. Turkey's TF-X KAAN programme illustrates the risks of partial transfer. Ankara secured airframe production rights but remains engine-dependent on foreign suppliers.

Russia has reportedly offered unprecedented access to the Su-57 fighter aircraft's source code in consultations for co-production.

The United Aircraft Corporation has signalled willingness to provide greater source code access than Western partners typically offer, potentially enabling deeper avionics customisation. This represents a strategic hedge against Western technological gatekeeping, leveraging existing infrastructure from licensed Su-30MKI production.

However, a hedge is credible only if the supplier possesses the technological and industrial depth to honour it. Russia's aerospace industry operates under sanctions-induced supply constraints, and the Su-57's engine programme remains in transition from AL-41F1 to Izdeliye 30.

Whether "full source code access" extends to mission system architecture or only limited avionics layers remains unclear. A hedge that substitutes one dependency for another does not deepen autonomy.

India is nearing a deal to export Su-30MKI fighters to Armenia valued at $3 billion. The Armenian variant will feature the indigenous Uttam AESA radar and Astra missiles. This marks India's shift from licensee to modifier-exporter, signalling a new level of absorption maturity.

Diversification as leverage

India's diversification across France, Russia, Israel, and the United States prevents supplier monopoly and strengthens negotiating leverage.

Operation Sindoor validated India's punitive airpower doctrine but exposed coordination complexities across Rafale, Su-30MKI, and Mirage 2000 platforms. The episode reinforced the primacy of software integration.

This has accelerated emphasis on Integrated Air Command and Control Systems and Theatre Commands.

Union Budget 2026-27 allocated a record ₹7.85 lakh crore to the Ministry of Defence, an increase of over 15%. Capital outlay surged by over 20% to ₹2.19 lakh crore. Approximately 75% of the capital budget, ₹1.39 lakh crore, is earmarked for domestic procurement under the Boosting Indigenous Defence Manufacturing category.

This fiscal expansion is industrial policy by design. The mandate forces global original equipment manufacturers to establish not just assembly lines but Tier 2 and Tier 3 supplier networks within India. Defence production reached Rs 1.51 lakh crore in the fiscal year 2024-25. The private sector's share rose to 23%.

Yet context matters. China's defence spending is estimated at approximately $249 billion. India's $93 billion budget necessitates an asymmetric strategy and qualitative superiority rather than numerical parity.

The resurgence of Donald Trump adds transactional volatility. Delays in engine deliveries underscore how American industrial bottlenecks directly impact Indian sovereign capabilities. Diversification of technology partners across France, Israel, and Russia is, thus, a geoeconomic necessity.

The path to strategic autonomy

The Indian Air Force achieved a TruVal Rating of 69.4 in the World Directory of Modern Military Aircraft 2026 rankings, placing it sixth globally. This surpasses China's rating of 63.8. This ranking reflects combat power and operational readiness. It does not measure industrial power or technological sovereignty.

As SIPRI notes, India is the world's fifth largest military spender at $86.1 billion in 2024 and remains a top arms importer, pursuing import reduction policies

The decisive metric is absorption capacity. Defence research and development received ₹29,100 crore in fiscal year 2026-27. Without doubling research intensity, co-development claims remain partial.

Tier 2 and Tier 3 suppliers face capital constraints. In advanced aerospace ecosystems such as the United States and France, domestic value capture in fighter aircraft programmes exceeds 60%.

In India, indigenous value-add in major licensed production platforms has historically ranged between 25-35%, concentrated in structural manufacturing rather than mission systems. Without deepening subsystem ownership, domestic content targets risk remaining assembly heavy.

Micro, small, and medium enterprises lack the depth of certification and access to advanced materials. Aerospace manufacturing requires long cycle capital and quality compliance infrastructure. India risks becoming a Tier 0 assembler without deep-tier ecosystem capacity.

Talent scarcity compounds infrastructure deficits. Demand for aerospace engineers is rising faster than the supply pipeline can keep up. Advanced manufacturing requires proficiency in artificial intelligence driven design and simulation capabilities. Industrial sovereignty ultimately depends on human capital sovereignty.

The true geoeconomic asset is not airframes. It is a proprietary design architecture. Software defined warfare means source codes determine autonomy.

Rafale integration dependency limits weapon customisation. Su-57 negotiations potentially bypass Western gatekeeping. Indigenous platforms like Tejas Mk2 and the Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft accumulate intellectual property over decades.

India's fighter jet moment is less about air dominance and more about industrial positioning. In an era of transactional geopolitics shaped by Trump's return, strategic autonomy will not be measured by aircraft on the tarmac. It will be measured by who owns the code inside them.

The 114 Rafale programme, Su-57 consultations, Armenia exports, and Tejas development signal structural ambition. Transformation depends on four conditions. First, doubling research and development intensity to match global norms.

Second, building deep-tier aerospace supply chains with capital access and certification capability. Third, securing source code access through strategic negotiations or indigenous development. Fourth, scaling high-end technical human capital through formalised training programmes.

As far as the source code of Rafales is concerned, if New Delhi remains dissatisfied with the API model offered by France, then it might be time to re-enact the GaN model again, reinforcing 'Atmanirbhar Bharat', which could be the first statement if not the first step, in attaining defence autonomy.

The laboratory, not the runway, will determine whether India ascends the defence hierarchy or remains its most sophisticated customer in the medium to long term.

Deepanshu Mohan is professor and dean, O.P. Jindal Global University. He is a visiting professor at LSE and a visiting academic fellow at University of Oxford. Saksham Raj and Nagappan Arun contributed to this column.

KERC hikes commercial, industrial power tariffs; agri pump set rate cut

The decision comes after a review petition was filed by the five power distribution companies in Karnataka

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) on Tuesday raised electricity tariffs for select commercial and industrial consumers to recover about ₹1,254.88 crore, while reducing the tariff for agricultural pumpsets from the earlier uniform ₹8.30 per unit to between ₹6.57 and ₹7.79 per unit for 2025-26. The order does not specify when the revised tariff will come into effect. This will lead to an increase in cost as there exists 9% electricity tax on the total bill amount.

The decision comes after a review petition filed by the State's five power distribution companies – Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom), Mangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (Mescom), Hubli Electricity Supply Company Limited (Hescom), Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Limited (CESC), and Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Limited (Gescom).

Electricity charges comparison table

Category	Existing FC (₹)	Revised FC (₹)	Difference FC	Existing EC (₹/unit)	Revised EC (₹/unit)	Difference EC (₹/unit)
LT-5 Bescom	150	165	15/HP	4.50	6.57	2.07
LT-5 Mescom	150	165	15/HP	4.50	7.40	2.90
LT-5 Cesc	150	165	15/HP	4.50	7.70	3.20
LT-5 Hescom	150	165	15/HP	4.50	7.73	3.23
LT-5 Gescom	150	165	15/HP	4.50	7.79	3.29
HT 2a DC	150	365	60/KVA	5.10	6.70	1.60

*EC: Energy Charge *FC: Fixed Charge *Source: Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission*

In its original tariff order dated March 27, 2025, the Commission had fixed a uniform rate of ₹8.30 per unit for low tension (agricultural pumpset) (LT-4A), which covers irrigation pumpsets used by farmers. Although farmers receive free electricity under the government policy for pumpsets up to 10 HP, the State compensates power companies through subsidies. In the 2025-26 Budget, the government had allocated ₹16,021 crore for this purpose. However, at ₹8.30 per unit, the total subsidy requirement worked out to ₹20,640 crore, creating a shortfall of ₹4,620 crore.

The companies argued that they could neither collect the gap from farmers, since supply is free under policy, nor sustain the loss if subsidy payments fell short.

They also said the tariff order had sharply reduced cross-subsidy support to agriculture and proposed eliminating it entirely by 2027-28, which they claimed went against the intent of the Electricity Act that allows gradual reduction but not complete removal. Industry bodies opposed the review, arguing there was no legal error in the original order and that any subsidy shortfall should be borne by the government, not shifted to commercial and industrial consumers.

The Commission agreed there was no apparent legal mistake in its earlier order. However, it allowed the review under the ground of "any other sufficient reason", stating that it must balance farmer protection with the need for power companies to recover costs. It noted that if subsidy funds were insufficient, companies might have to demand payment from farmers, causing hardship.

During the proceedings, it was placed on record that the State government would provide an additional ₹2,362.47 crore over the original ₹16,021 crore allocation.

The companies would mobilise ₹1,107.60 crore through other revenues, and the remaining ₹1,254.88 crore would be recovered by increasing tariffs for select commercial and industrial categories.

Accordingly, the LT-4A tariff has now been reduced from ₹8.30 per unit to ₹6.57 per unit for Bescom, ₹7.40 for Mescom, ₹7.70 for CESC, ₹7.73 for Hescom, and ₹7.79 for Gescom. To offset this reduction, tariffs have been revised upward.

For LT-3A (commercial), the fixed charge has been set at ₹235 per kW and the energy charge at ₹7.10 per unit. For LT-5 (industry), the energy charge has been set at ₹5.20 per unit, and for HT-2A (industry), the energy charge has been set at ₹6.70 per unit. For HT-2B (commercial high tension), the energy charge has been set at ₹6.90 per unit.

Drugs worth ₹13.55 crore seized in city

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Continuing their crackdown on narcotics trafficking, the Bengaluru City Police seized drugs worth over ₹13.55 crore in multiple operations across the city, arresting several accused and initiating action under the NDPS Act, 1985.

In the first case, the Narcotics Control Wing of the Central Crime Branch arrested two inter-State drug peddlers – Ashwin and Mubeena, originally from Kerala – and seized narcotic substances worth ₹11.50 crore from their rented accommodation at Bagalur. The seized contraband included 8,335 LSD strips, 5 kg of hydro ganja, and 534 g of charas.

According to the police, the duo had been residing in Bengaluru for the past one year and are allegedly part of an organised drug distribution network. They were reportedly receiving narcotic substances from a Kerala native, who is currently residing in Thailand, and distributing them to customers in the city, as per his instructions. "A case has been registered against them under the NDPS Act, 1985, at Bagalur Police Station. Further investigation is under way to trace other members," said a police statement.

In a separate operation, the Whitefield police arrested a suspect and seized 27.2 kg of ganja and 3.2 kg of hashish oil worth an estimated ₹55 lakh. The police said the accused was transporting the drugs for distribution and sale. In another operation, police seized 1.5 kg of hydro ganja valued at approximately ₹1.5 crore. The contraband had reportedly been smuggled using international parcel services and concealed inside chocolate and biscuit boxes to evade detection.

NIA court convicts seven, including two from State, in 2015 fake currency case

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A Special Court of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) in Visakhapatnam convicted seven persons, including two from Karnataka, in a 2015 Fake Indian Currency Notes (FICN) case involving cross-border trafficking of high-quality counterfeit currency.

The court awarded simple imprisonment (SI) ranging from seven to 10 years, along with fines, under various provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The convicts are Saddam Hossain, Amirul Hoque of Barpeta district, and Mohammed Akber Ali from Kamrup district in Assam; Roustum and Mohammad Hakim Sheikh of Malda district in West Bengal; and Saddam Hussein from Bengaluru, Sayed Imran from Mandya in Karnataka.

Hossain of Barpeta district was sentenced to 10 years of SI and a fine of ₹5,000 under Section 16 of the UA(P) Act. He was arrested by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence, Visakhapatnam, in September 2015 after high-quality FICN with a face value of ₹5,01,500 was seized from him at Visakhapatnam Railway Station while he was travelling by train.

Hoque, also from Barpeta, was sentenced to 10 years of SI and fined ₹5,000 under Section 18 of the UA(P) Act. Roustum of Malda district was sentenced to seven years of SI and a fine of ₹2,000 under Section 20 of the UA(P) Act. Sheikh, also from Malda, received eight years of SI and a fine of ₹5,000, under Section 18 of the Act.

From Karnataka, Hussein of Bengaluru and Imran of Mandya were each sentenced to seven years of SI and fined ₹2,000 under Section 20 of the UA(P) Act. According to the NIA, Imran is also a convict in another FICN case investigated by the agency in Visakhapatnam. A similar sentence was imposed on Ali of Kamrup district, Assam.

Investigation found that the accused were part of a larger conspiracy involving trafficking of high-quality counterfeit currency through the Indo-Bangladesh border and its circulation in different parts of the country. The racket was aimed at disrupting India's financial security, the NIA claimed.

The NIA took over the case in December 2015.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Employment Notice No.CMP/01/GAZ dated 26.02.2026
Notification for interview for engagement of Doctors as Contract Medical Practitioners (CMPs) as GDMOs in Mysuru Division on contract basis.
Description of work : South Western Railway, Mysuru Division is inviting applications to engage 03 three (01 UR, 01 SC, 01 EWS) Contract Medical Practitioners as GDMOs as full time Medical Practitioners for a period of one year or till the regular IRHS doctors are posted whichever is earlier in Mysuru Division, South Western Railway.
Venue of the interview: Office of the Sr. Divisional Personnel Officer, DRM office Building, Irwin Road, Mysuru-570001.
Date of Interview: 11.03.2026 (Wednesday)
Time : 10.00 hrs to 14.00 hrs
For full details of notification, aspirants may login to the web site: **www.swr.indianrailways.gov.in** (About us. Divisions-Mysuru-Personnel Branch- Notification/selections)
Senior Divisional Personnel Officer/ Mysuru
PUB/956/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.
South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | @SWRAILWAYHQ | @sw_railways

THE HINDU GROUP
Your feedback will keep us Cleaner, Sharper and Bolder
Call our toll-free number **1800 102 1878**
Or write to us at **customercare@thehindu.co.in**
Scan the QR code to register your feedback
THE HINDU | thehindu businessline. | FRONTLINE | SPORTSTAR | THE HINDU Young World | THE HINDU

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
ENGINEERING WORKS
Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Central Railway, Solapur on Behalf of President of India, invites e-tender from the reputed firms / contractor for the following works. **Tender Notice No.:-** 05-20226-SrDENS, **Name of Work:-** 1) Miscellaneous P.Way works under SSE(P.Way)SDB section under ADEN/ KLBG Sub-Division. 2) Miscellaneous P.Way works under SSE(P.Way) DUD section under ADEN/SUR(S) Sub-Division., **Approximate Cost of the work.:-** Rs. 75257993.82, **Earnest Money:-** Rs. 526300.00, **Completion period of the work.:-** 24 Months, **Maintenance Period:-** NA, **Tender Notice No.:-** 06-20226-SrDENS, **Name of Work:-** 1. Provision of approach road in railway colonies at KLBG-KUI section under ADEN/KLBG sub division. 2. Provision of approach road in railway colonies at Wadi MR section under ADEN/KLBG sub division., **Approximate Cost of the work.:-** Rs. 83387381.41, **Earnest Money:-** Rs. 566900.00, **Completion period of the work.:-** 12 Months, **Maintenance Period:-** 24 Months, **Tender Notice No.:-** 07-20226-SrDENS, **Name of Work:-** [1] Operation and maintenance of Water Recycling Plant of 350 KLD capacity at Wadi for 36 months. [2] Operation, maintenance and running of Sewage Treatment Plant of 15 KLD at RB II Modi colony Solapur for 36 months. [3] Repairs to pipeline for WRP at Porter chawl, Solapur., **Approximate Cost of the work.:-** Rs. 6267278.27, **Earnest Money:-** Rs. 125400.00, **Completion period of the work.:-** 36 Months, **Maintenance Period:-** NA, Last date & Time of uploading quoted tender on **www.ireps.gov.in** website. **23/03/2026 upto 15.00 hrs.**, Date & Time of Opening of tender on **www.ireps.gov.in 23/03/2026 at 15.30 hrs.**, The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. Website: **www.ireps.gov.in.**
Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Solapur
13
Keep your animals away from railway lines

IN THE HON'BLE COURT OF PRINCIPAL CITY CIVIL COURT AND SESSIONS JUDGE AT BENGALURU (CCH-1)
MIS. NO. 220 OF 2026
Between : Vyakti Vikas Kendra, India (VVKI),
A Registered Public Charitable Trust, having its registered office at No. 19, 39th A Cross, 11th Main, 4th "T" Block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru – 560041.
Represented by its Trustees
1. **Sri. Rohit Sikka**, Son of Romesh Kumar Sikka, aged about 50 years, residing at Art of Living International Center, 21st Km. Kanakapura Road, Udayapura, Bangalore South, Karnataka- 560082,
2. **Smt. Sanjitha M. Chudgar**, Daughter of Mahendra Kumar, aged about 59 years, residing at Art of Living International Center, 21st Km. Kanakapura Road, Udayapura, Bangalore South, Karnataka-560082
...Petitioner
-Versus- Nill ... Respondent
PUBLIC NOTICE BY PAPER PUBLICATION
Whereas the above named petitioners have lodged this Petition under Section 92 of CPC for grant of Permission to sell Schedule Trust Property. Any person has lawful vested interest in the petitioner trust or schedule properties may lodge Caveat/objection and oppose issuance of such permission on the next date of hearing scheduled **on 06/04/2026 in the forenoon at 11 'O' Clock** either in person or through authorized agent or through Advocate, failing which the matter will be proceeded with.
SCHEDULE PROPERTY
1. All piece and parcel of land bearing survey No. 965/1 measuring an extent of 1.45 Acres, 965/3 measuring an extent of 1.95 Acres, survey No. 966/2 measuring an extent of 1.07 Acres, 967/2 measuring an extent of 1.57 Acres, 968/2 measuring an extent of 3.39 Acres in total measuring an extent of 9.43 Acres situated at Tamil Nadu State, Coimbatore North Registration District Periyanaickenpalayam Sub-Registration District Coimbatore North Taluk No. 2 Gudalur Village, bounded on and by:
East by : Property bearing S.F.No. 958 and 957
West by : Property bearing S.F. Nos. 967/1 and 966/1
North by : Property bearing S.F. No. 969/2
South by : Property bearing S.F.No. 964
2. All piece and parcel of land bearing survey No.953 measuring an extent of 0.25 Acres situated at Tamil Nadu State, Coimbatore North Registration District Periyanaickenpalayam Sub-Registration District Coimbatore North Taluk No. 2 Gudalur Village, bounded on and by:
East by : Property bearing S.F. No. 950
West by : Property bearing S.F. No. 958
North by : Property bearing S.F. No. 954
South by: Property bearing S.F. No. 953 (remaining land) **North**: S.F. No. 954 **East**: S.F. No. 950
West: S.F. No. 958
South: S.F. No. 953 (remaining land)
3. All piece and parcel of land bearing survey No.958/2 measuring an extent of 0.18 Acres situated at Tamil Nadu State, Coimbatore North Registration District Periyanaickenpalayam Sub-Registration District Coimbatore North Taluk No. 2 Gudalur Village, bounded on and by:
East by : Property bearing S.F. No. 953 (Pathway)
West by : Property bearing S.F. No. 957/1
North by : Property bearing S.F. No. 957/1
South by : Property bearing S.F. No. 958/2 (remaining land)
Given Under the Seal and Signature of this Court on this the 26th day of the month of February of year 2026.
By Order Of Court
Sd/- Senior Sheristedar
City Civil Court, Bengaluru.
Prajwal Mahesh B.B.A,LL.B.(Hons), LL.M.,
Advocate & Attorney at Law
No. 799, Ground floor, 15th Cross, 12th Main, Saraswathipuram, Mysuru - 570009
Mob: 9481356378.
Email: prajwalmahesh95@gmail.com

NATIONAL CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL COMMISSION
GOVT. OF INDIA (Constituted Under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986)
Upbhokta Nyay Bhawan, F. Block, General Pool Office Complex, INA, NEW DELHI-110023
Tele phone no.-011-24608735 / 011-24608756
Email-Fa.nedre@gmail.com
FIRST APPEAL No. NC/FA/207/2025 WITH NC/IA/5305/2025, NC/IA/5306/2025, NC/IA/5307/2025, NC/IA/5308/2025, NC/IA/543/2026, NC/IA/2008/2026
(Against the Order dated 30 June 2023 in Complaint no. CC/586/2019 of the State Commission Karnataka) C.V. SHELTERS PVT. LTD. ...**APPELLANT**
-Versus-
SMT.ANURADHA.N. & ORS. ...**RESPONDENT(s)**
FIRST APPEAL NO. NC/FA/209/2025:
(Against the Order dated 30 June 2023 in Complaint no. CC/588/2019 of the State Commission Karnataka) C.V. SHELTERS PVT. LTD ...**APPELLANT**
-Versus-.
MRS. ANUSHREE ARUNKUMAR VASANAD & ORS. ...**RESPONDENT(s)**
FIRST APPEAL NO. NC/FA/210/2025:
(Against the Order dated 30 June 2023 in Complaint no. CC/587/2019 of the State Commission Karnataka) C.V. SHELTERS PVT. LTD. ...**APPELLANT**
-Versus-
MR. MURALI V. & ORS. ...**RESPONDENT(s)**
FIRST APPEAL NO. NC/FA/211/2025
(Against the Order dated 30 June 2023 in Complaint no. CC/589/2019 of the State Commission Karnataka) C.V. SHELTERS PVT. LTD. ...**APPELLANT**
-Versus-
MR. SAYANTAN CHAUDHURY & ORS. ...**RESPONDENT(s)**
FIRST APPEAL NO. NC/FA/212/2025
(Against the Order dated 30 June 2023 in Complaint no. CC/590/2019 of the State Commission Karnataka) C.V. SHELTERS PVT. LTD. ...**APPELLANT**
-Versus-
MR. RAVI PRABHU & ORS. ...**RESPONDENT(s)**
FIRST APPEAL NO. NC/FA/213/2025
(Against the Order dated 30 June 2023 in Complaint no. CC/591/2019 of the State Commission Karnataka) C.V. SHELTERS PVT. LTD. ...**APPELLANT**
-Versus-
MR. SATYAJIT BHUYAN & ORS. ...**RESPONDENT(s)**
To, 1. M/S TRIANGLE REALTY VENTURES PVT.LTD, REP. BY ITS DIRECTOR MR. N.H.BHASKAR REDDY. HAVING ITS REGISTERED OFFICE AT NO. 5, TRIANGLE HOUSE, 13TH A CROSS, 9TH MAIN, 6TH SECTOR, HSR LAYOUT, BENGALURU-560102. 2. M/S TRIANGLE REALTY VENTURES PVT.LTD. NO. L-152, 7 MAIN, 10" SECTOR, LIC COLONY, HAL III STAGE, BANGALORE:-560075 M/S ANISH PROJECTS DEVELOPERS PVT. LTD. REP. BY ITS DIRECTOR MR. N.H. BHASKAR REDDY, HAVING ITS REGISTERED OFFICE AT NO. 5, GROUND FLOOR, 13TH A CROSS, 9TH MAIN, 6TH SECTOR, HSR LAYOUT, BENGALURU-560102
NOTICE
WHEREAS in the First Appeal No. 207/2025, 209/2025, 210/2025, 211/2025, 212/2025, 213/2025 filed against the order dated 30-06-2023 in Complaint Nos. CC/586/2019, CC/588/2019, CC/587/2019, CC/589/2019, CC/590/2019, CC/591/2019 respectively, arising out of the Order of the State Commission, KARNATAKA, you have been arrayed as R-3 (M/S Triangle Realty Ventures Pvt. Ltd.) & R-4 (M/S Anish Projects Developers Pvt. Ltd.) in First Appeals Nos. 207/2025, 209/2025 & 210/2025 and R-2 (M/S Triangle Realty Ventures Pvt. Ltd.) & R-3 (M/S Anish Projects Developers Pvt. Ltd.) in First Appeals Nos. 211/2025, 212/2025 & 213/2025.
WHEREAS this Commission has ordered vide order dated " 22-01-2026" to effect service upon respondents (mentioned in above paragraph) by this Publication returnable on " 06-04-2026".
NOW, THEREFORE, TAKE NOTICE through this publication to appear before this Hon'ble Commission in person or through your Counsel/Authorized Representative on "06-04-2026" failing which these appeals will be disposed of on merits in your absence.
Dated: 20-02-2026 Assistant Registrar
Place: New Delhi
Copy to: **MS. ADITI DANI,** (ADVOCATE) S-74, LGF, GREATER KAILASH-I, NEW DELHI-110048

CLASSIFIEDS MART
TO ADVERTISE VISIT
www.thehinduads.com
CALL: Bengaluru: 98455 29981 ▪ 080-22071826
Mangaluru: 0824-2417575 ▪ 2417580
Hubballi: 0836-2338600 ▪ 2335700

EDUCATIONAL
VACANCIES
JNANASAHYADRI INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
(CBSE Curriculum) Gundashettikoppa, Soraba, Karnataka – 577429 | CBSE Aff. No - 831626
Invites Applications from Qualified & Passionate Teachers for
PRT / TGT (All Subjects)
Co-curricular : Music, Art, Sports / Physical Education, Computer.
Salary: As per experience, Accommodation Provided.
CBSE / ICSE Preferred. Interview Place - Bangalore
To apply Send your CV via Email: jsiscvs2025@gmail.com
or WhatsApp: 70820 57861, 63625 52338
Principal

PERSONAL
CHANGE OF NAME
I **NAGARATHNA** Patil, W/O Gopan Gouda Patil, R/O : NO–70, 1ST Floor, 5th Main, REMCO Layout, Hampinagar, Vijayanagar, BLR – 560040. Have changed my name as Nagarathna Sharanappa Patil.

I, **NISHAN** NIHAR RANJAN GANTAYAT S/o Nihar Ranjan Gantayat R/o REB 208 Purva Riviera Apartments Old Airport Road Munekollala Marathahali Bengaluru – 560037 have changed my name to NISHAN GANTAYAT.

I, **Md** Shamshel Ansari, S/o Samsul Ansari R/o V14 DLF Woodland Heights, Jigani,Bangalore-560105, have changed my name to Md Shamsher Ansari vide Affidavit No. IN-KA97361129889017Y dated 03/03/2026. Henceforth, I shall be known as Md Shamsher Ansari.

I, **OBULLI** Chetty .N, R/o No.27, 2nd Crs, Ballappa Lyt, Koramangala Mn Rd, Adugodi, B'lore-560030 have changed my name to Obuli Chetty.N vide affidavit dt: 28.02.2026 sworn before Notary P.N.Nagesha, B'luru.

BUSINESS OFFERS
KERALA AYURVEDA – DISTRIBUTORS / SUPER STOCKISTS WANTED
GMP Certified unit in Kerala seeks Distributors/Super Stockists in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka for Herbal Medicine, Oils, Personal Care. High margins, quality products.
Call: +91 9072320849 (10 am - 5pm),
Email : ayurresearchsales@gmail.com

SITUATION VACANT
GENERAL
CHENNAI PORT AUTHORITY
No.1, Rajaji Salai, Chennai– 600001
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT
VACANCY NOTICE
File No.RC2/5629/2022/GA
Dated: 04.03.2026
Chennai Port Authority, an autonomous body under the Government of India, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, invites applications for filling up one post of Marine Engineer (UR) (Class I) in Marine Department in the scale of pay of Rs.70000-200000 under Direct Recruitment basis.
Eligible candidates have to apply through "Online Application Portal" (OAP) of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways **(http://onlinevacancyshipmin.nic.in)**
For further details, visit Chennai Port Authority's Website viz., **www.chennaiport.gov.in.** Last date for receipt of applications is 03.04.2026. Eligible Candidates applied will be selected for the above posts based on overall performance in the interview and / or written test.
Chennai – 600001. Secretary

TO BOOK
THANKSGIVING
Advertisements
in
THE HINDU
Contact:
080 - 22071800 / 22864240
080 - 22071826 / 22071827
Rate per advertisement (3.5 X 5 cms) Rs. 790/-

LEGAL NOTICE
IN THE COURT OF LVII THE ADDITIONAL CITY CIVIL AND SESSIONS JUDGE AT MAYOHALL, BENGALURU (CCCH No. 58)
Paper publication for issuance of public notice with respect to the matter
P & SC No. 25004/2026
BETWEEN : Mrs. LINDA PETERS, Wife of Late Mr. Pulikkottil Peter George, Aged about 76 years, Residing at D-516, Sena Vihar, Kammanahalli Main Road, Kalyan Nagar P.O, Bengaluru- 560 043.
...PETITIONER
AND : NIL ...RESPONDENT
COURT NOTICE
Service of notice by paper publication under Order 5 Rule 20(1) of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908
Whereas the above named Petitioner has filed a petition before the said Hon'ble Court under Section 278 of the Indian Succession Act, 1925 seeking letters of administration in respect of Account No.32024818783, Account No.10867586049 and to the contents within the locker availed by the deceased Mr. Pulikkottil Peter George all of which are maintained by the State Bank of India, SPPB Branch, St. Mark's Road, Bengaluru.
Interested parties are to appear in this Court (CCCH-58) in person or by pleader and show cause on or before **date 9.3.2026** failing which the petition will be heard in your absence.
Given under my hand and seal of the court on 18th day of February 2026.
By order of the Court, Deputy Registrar, City Civil Court, Mayo Hall Unit, Bengaluru.
Advocate for Petitioner :
Varun Nair Vivek
S-202, 2nd Floor, Swiss Complex, No.33, Race Course Road, Bengaluru-560001.

IN THE COURT OF THE ADDITIONAL CITY CIVIL JUDGE BANGALORE CITY, BANGALORE AT MAYOHALL (CCCH - 29)
P&SC NO.25014 /2026
BETWEEN: **1. SMT. RIZWANA ANWAR** Wife of Late Syed Khadeer Ahamed Aged about 62 years, Residing at No. 10/5, Millers Road, Benson Town, BANGALORE-560046 **PETITIONER NO,1**
2. SMT. MISBAH BERGIS Daughter of Late Syed Khadeer Ahamed Aged about 33 years, Residing at No. 10/5, Millers Road, Benson Town, BANGALORE – 560 046 Presently at: 40a Northwick Avenue, Harrow London, Ha3 0ab, United Kingdom Rep. by her GPA and Brother **SYED HASEEB AHMED** Son of Late Syed Khadeer Ahamed Aged about 29 years, Residing at No. 10/5, Millers Road, Benson Town, BANGALORE- 560 046 Presently at: Villa No. 70, Al Bateen, Al Ain, UAE **PETITIONER NO. 2**
3. SYED HASEEB AHMED Son of Late Syed Khadeer Ahamed Aged about 29 years, Son of Late Syed Khadeer Ahamed Aged about 29 years, Residing at No. 10/5, Millers Road, Benson Town, BANGALORE – 560 046 Presently at: Villa No. 70, Al Bateen, Al Ain, UAE **PETITIONER NO, 3**
AND: NIL **RESPONDENTS**
PUBLIC NOTICE
Service of summons by paper publication under Order 5 Rule 20 (1) A of the Code of Civil Procedure Code, 1908
WHEREAS, the Petitioners have filed a petition for Grant of Letters of Administration in respect of M/s Global Edge Associates the proprietary firm of Late Syed Khadeer Ahamed (DOD: 12.10.2025).
Interested persons are to appear before the XXVIII Addl. City Civil and Sessions Judge. Mayo Hall at Bangalore on 25th day of March 2026 11 a.m., in person or through a pleader, failing which, the petition will be determined in their absence.
PETITION SCHEDULE PROPERTY
M/s Global Edge Associates at No. 10/5, Millers Road, Benson Town, Bangalore North. Bangalore - 560 046 having the following assets and liabilities:
Balance Sheet (As on 31.03.2025)

Liabilities	Amount (₹)	Assets	Amount (₹)
Capital Account	37,34,424.03	Cash in Hand	9,28,903.92
Sundry Creditors	7,05,833.00	Cash at Bank (Canara Bank C/A #11533)	8,76,363.35
Outstanding Expenses	45,000.00	Deposits & Advances - Telephone Deposit	1,000.00
		Investment - Jewellery	
		• Opening Balance	2,93,000.00
		• Add: Additions	1,48,500.00
		• Total	4,41,500.00
		Sundry Debtors (as per Schedule)	13,59,566.76
		Fixed Assets (as per Schedule)	32,433.00
		Closing Stock	8,45,500.00
Balance Sheet Total	44,85,257.03	Balance Sheet Total	44,85,257.03

Given under my hand and seal of the Court on this 02.03.2026
By order of the court
Deputy Registrar, City Civil Court, Mayo Hall Unit, Bengaluru
Advocate for Plaintiff: **YUKTHA ANIL**
No. 402, HTC Aspire 19 Ali Asker Road. Bangalore - 560 052

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS DEPARTMENT
TAMIL NADU GOVERNMENT M.G.R. FILM AND TELEVISION INSTITUTE
CHENNAI –600113.
SHORT TERM RE-TENDER NOTICE
Re-Tender Notice No.0375-1/Sk/2026
Tamil Nadu Government M.G.R. Film and Television Institute invites e-Tender (Two cover system) from the reputed bidders for the Supply, Installation, Integration, Testing And Commissioning of Equipment, Computer Hardware, Software and Accessories for Cinematography, Digital Intermediate, Audiography, Direction & Screenplay Writing, Film Editing and Animation & Visual Effects Sections on Academic pricing on turnkey basis along with comprehensive onsite warranty for Three (3) years.
Scope of work, qualification criteria, EMD, receipt of tender, opening of tender and all other details are available in the website https://www.tntenders.gov.in. If any changes / corrections etc to the Tender, it will be published on the above website only. e-Tender document can be downloaded at free of cost from the website https://tntenders.gov.in from 04.03.2026 at 3.00 pm onwards. Last Date for submission of Tender is on 10.03.2026 upto 4.00 pm.
DIRECTOR,
INFORMATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS,CHENNAI.
DIPR/1541/Tender/2026

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATION AND WATER SUPPLY DEPARTMENT
Directorate of Municipal Administration, Chennai-600 028. Tel: 044-29864447
Roc.No.25245/2025/P1 **Notice for Inviting Tender (NIT) - Corrigendum** **Dated : 03.03.2026**
Tender notice issued with Roc. No. 25245/2025/P1, Date: 16.02.2026, published on 17.02.2026 in The Hindu Newspaper, for Selection of concessionaire for redevelopment of old bus stand along with commercial development on Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) basis (for 45 years) under PPP Mode at **Namakkal, Tiruchirappalli, Hosur and Tiruvannamalai Corporations** and Selection of concessionaire for development of commercial complex at Erode Central Bus Stand on Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) basis (for 45 years) under PPP mode at **Erode Corporation.** Amendment has been made in serial number **4,5,6 and 7** of the above-mentioned notice.
In serial number 4 and 5, "04.03.2026" shall be read as "10.03.2026".
In serial number 6 and 7, "02.04.2026" shall be read as "15.04.2026".
Chief Engineer,
Directorate of Municipal Administration,
Chennai-600 028
DIPR/ 1543/TENDER/2026

GOVERNMENT OF TAMILNADU
WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
Middle Cauvery Basin Circle, Trichy – 20.
TNWRD
E- Tender Notice No. 14 / 2025 - 2026 / DO1 / MCBC / Trichy / Dated 02.03.2026
Short Term Tender Notice
For and on behalf of Governor of Tamil Nadu, e-tenders are invited by the Superintending Engineer, WRD, Middle Cauvery Basin Circle, Trichy from the experienced in Construction of irrigation projects and eligible registered contractors for the following work

Sl. No.	Name of work	Approximate Value of work (including GST 18%) (Rs. in Lakhs)	EMD in Rs.	Period of completion (including Rainy Season)	Tender submission through online Closing Date and time	Opening of Tender through online date and time
	River Conservancy Division, Trichy					
	Lumpsum Contract - Item Rate Contract (Two Cover System)					
1.	Repair & Renewal of groove guide, hoisting arrangements, overhauling of rollers and providing abrasive blast cleaning, application of high performance primary coating and coal tar epoxy to vent No. 1 to 66 and 68 to 98 in Mayanur Barrage at Krishnarayapuram Taluk of Karur District	3975.08	19,98,000	18 Months	11.03.2026 Upto 3.00 PM	12.03.2026 3.00 PM onwards

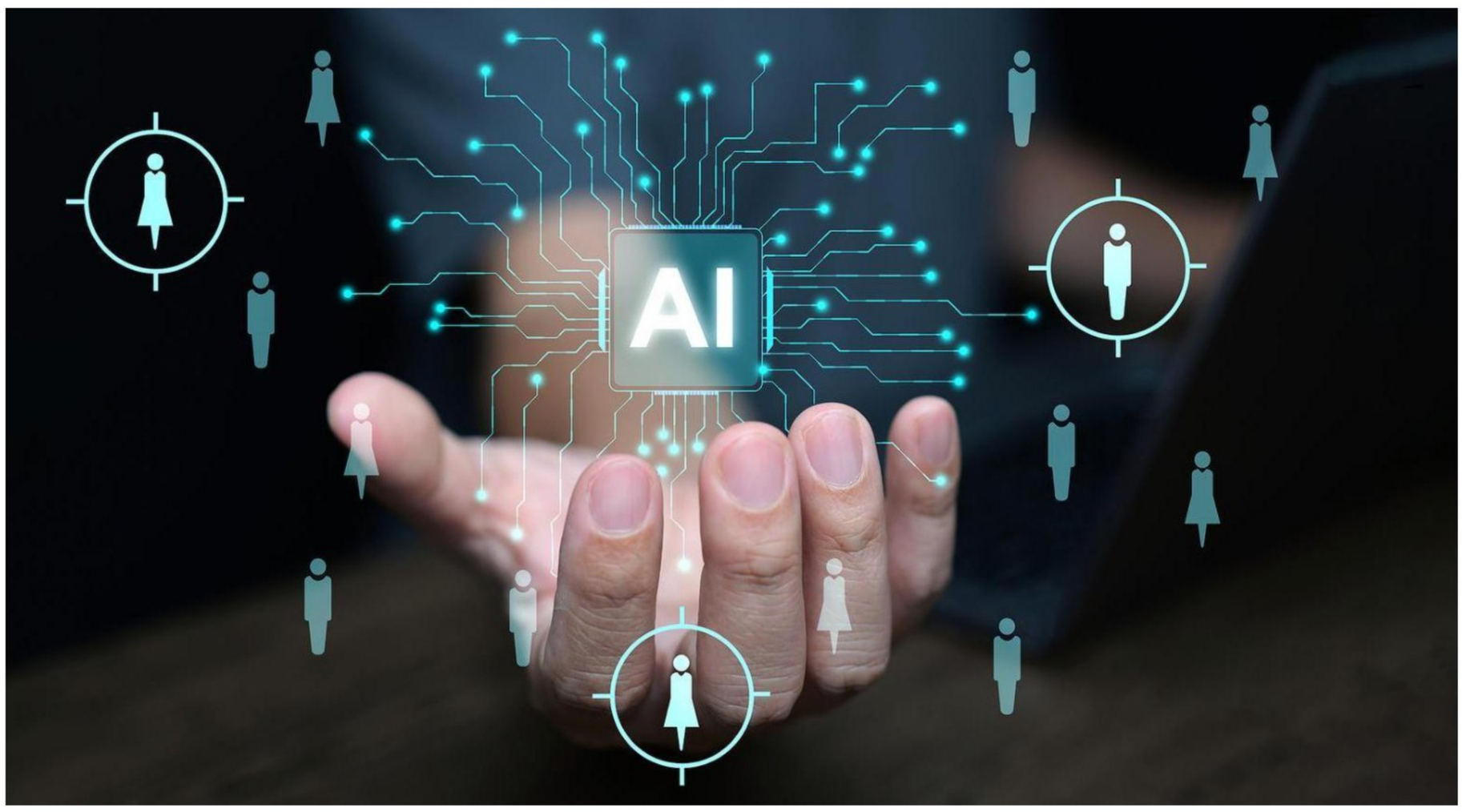
Tender documents will be available in the Government web site **http://www.tntenders.gov.in.** from **05.03.2026** and it can be downloaded free of cost as mentioned above and submission of tender shall be done only through online. Remittance of EMD and other details can also be available from the above and in the office timing in office of the Superintending Engineer, WRD, Middle Cauvery Basin Circle, Trichy. Eligible Class - From the MSME and registered as contractor with TNPWD / TNWRD (Registration must be in live). Any corrections / Extension / Corrigendum if any will be issued in the above website only.
Superintending Engineer, WRD,
Middle Cauvery Basin Circle, Trichy
DIPR/1505/TENDER/2026

STATE INDUSTRIES PROMOTION CORPORATION OF TAMIL NADU LIMITED
19-A, RUKMANI LAKSHMIPATHY ROAD, EGMORE, CHENNAI-600 008.
CIN U74999TN1971SGC005967
(ONLINE ONLY)
Tender Notice - NIT No.65/CD/T.No.65/2025-26, Dt.03.03.2026
For and on behalf of State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited, tenders are invited under "**Two Cover System**" through online only for the following work from **qualified Bidders** having experience in similar nature of works as mentioned under. Tenders will be received upto **15.30 Hrs** (as per server system clock) on **06.04.2026** and the same will be opened at **15.30 Hrs** (as per server system clock) on **07.04.2026.**

Name of Work	Approx. value of work	EMD
Formation of Road from Parcel 'B' to Parcel 'A' from Km 0/880 to km 0/080 including an additional length of 1.44 Km in newly to be acquired lands at SIPCOT Industrial Park Sivagangai	Rs. 3091.05 Lakhs (including GST @18%)	Rs.15,56,000 /-*

* EMD shall be paid through **eBG** only (as per list of Banks attached in the Annexure-III)
The tender schedule can be downloaded at free of cost from the website **https://tntenders.gov.in**
MANAGING DIRECTOR
DIPR/ 1556 /Tender/2026

CACHE



What are the AI Impact Casebooks released in the AI Summit 2026?

What do the AI Impact Casebooks reveal about India's use of indigenous AI tools in different regions to address challenges faced by various sections of the population?

Bhanu Potta

The story so far:

At the India AI Impact Summit 2026, a set of AI Impact Casebooks were released that described real time artificial intelligence (AI) deployment currently benefiting farmers, students and teachers, patients and the physically challenged in the Global South.

How does AI aid the physically challenged?

The Accessibility Casebook details usecases for the physically challenged. For the visually impaired, the PathPal edge-AI system allows users to point their smartphone at handwritten notices, printed text, or even Indian currency notes and receive instant spoken feedback in their preferred language—crucial for independent financial transactions and mobility in areas with unstable internet connection.

Standard optical character recognition (OCR) fails on complex documents, but SMARTON uses advanced computer vision to understand document structure, reading tables row-by-row and converting visual layouts like diagrams and charts into structured audio explanations. Deployed across schools and NGOs, it serves over 15,000 users, showing inclusive education can be scaled up.

Shruti AI bridges the communication gap for the deaf by providing real-time voice-to-Indian Sign Language translation. Meanwhile, Vaani AI offers augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) support for individuals with autism or speech impairments, utilising intent prediction and contextual prompts to help users communicate daily needs and reduce caregiver dependence.

Pheezee, an AI-powered wearable, integrates joint mobility sensors and surface muscle activity sensors to quantify muscle recovery, particularly for patients suffering from strokes or amputations.

How is AI helping to boost earnings of small farmers?

Agriculture in the Global South is a high-stakes gamble against forces that smallholder farmers cannot control, including erratic monsoons, invisible soil chemistry, and fragmented markets. Furthermore, traditional agricultural extension systems are severely strained. In some parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, the ratio of extension agents to farmers is 1:50,000, leaving millions without timely guidance.

The Agriculture Casebook showcases how AI is stepping in, to bridge this massive intelligence gap.

MapMyCrop, an AI platform monitoring sugarcane farms across India, fuses multi-sensor satellite imagery with super-resolution algorithms to act as a digital twin for farms, predicting the precise 15-day window when sucrose levels will peak.

This has helped farmers boost yields from the traditional 98-148 tonnes per hectare to up to 358 tonnes—a staggering 57% improvement.

The Chemistry-Aware Crop Yield Prediction system bypasses the limitations of traditional soil testing. By employing physics-guided machine learning and multi-temporal satellite data, it reads the invisible chemical makeup of soil to detect hidden toxicities and nutrient imbalances, allowing farmers to reduce nitrogen use by 28% while boosting yields.

Maharashtra's MahaVISTAAR and Africa's FarmAdvice employ natural language processing and voice-first interfaces to mitigate literacy barriers. Farmers simply speak in their local dialects to receive expert-vetted advice on pest outbreaks or weather anomalies, democratising predictive capabilities that were once the exclusive domain of massive agribusinesses.

How can AI intervention promote women empowerment?

The Gender Empowerment Casebook was developed from a pool of over 235 global submissions.

NyayaSakhi-SWATI is an AI-supported legal assistant deployed in Maharashtra to guide survivors of domestic violence. Trained on women-specific legal judgments, it helps women privately understand their rights, likely legal remedies, and case timelines before they ever set foot in a courtroom or pay a lawyer.

The AtenIA initiative in Peru is actively combatting the cultural stereotypes that exclude girls from STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) fields.

Using a "phygital" model—blending physical books with a cloud-hosted conversational AI—the system mentors young girls, intentionally redirecting biased prompts to highlight women's leadership in engineering and science.

Participants' intention to pursue STEM careers jumped from 9% to 76%.

Through localised, peer-led training, YASHODA AI teaches women in rural and semi-urban areas how to identify AI-driven harms like deepfakes and financial scams.

Operating in States like Odisha, MetsaQ uses small language models to deliver voice-based agricultural advisories. Because it was designed with intentional inclusion—partnering with women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and ensuring offline functionality - 42% of its users in Odisha are women.

By giving women farmers verifiable digital records of their farming activities, the platform has helped 34% of participating farmers access formal credit, compared to a baseline of just 11%.

Can AI provide healthcare solutions?

The Health Casebook talks about Nayanamritham 2.0, a government-led initiative in Kerala, that has integrated AI into the State's chronic eye disease screening program. This is a functioning public health instrument democratising access to diabetic retinopathy screening.

Cough Against TB (CATB) is an AI tool strengthening tuberculosis elimination efforts by triaging potential cases through sound analysis. In Rwanda and Kenya, AI-assisted visual inspection tools are augmenting human expertise to screen for cervical cancer, addressing the critical shortage of oncologists in rural areas.

AyurVAID D-RISK utilises machine learning for non-invasive diabetes detection, while the Predictive Virtual Cardiac Twin platform allows surgeons to visualise the patient's heart in 3D before making an incision.

Can AI be an education partner?

In the Education Casebook, BharatGen Yojaka stands out as a "human-in-the-loop" AI assessment platform. By automating the evaluation of spoken language, it enables scalable formative assessment in public schools while retaining teacher oversight.

Chimple offers a Generative AI studio that empowers educators to create curriculum-aligned learning games in local languages, directly tackling the shortage of vernacular educational resources. For students in India's Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities, the casebook highlights QwiXGenie, an AI tutoring platform for coding and technical skills. Other tools, like PadhAI, use speech recognition to assess oral reading fluency, providing immediate feedback to users.

Bhanu Potta is presently the Senior Advisor at Birla AI Labs, and the Founding Partner at ZingerLabs.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

A quiz on Holi, celebrated as a festival of colours in India

Sindhu Nagaraj

QUESTION 1
Holi celebrates the arrival of which season in India?

QUESTION 2
Holi commemorates the victory of Vishnu as Narasimha over which demon king from mythology?

QUESTION 3
This festival, related to Holi, is a Hindu swing festival celebrated during this time, especially in Assam, Odisha, Gujarat and Bengal. What is this called?

QUESTION 4
This community started celebrating the festival, at least through the 19th century, with its historic texts referring to it as Hola. It is also called Hola Mohalla. Name the community?

QUESTION 5
This is a national holiday in this country, where it is called Phagwa festival. The capital of this country is Paramaribo. Name the country.

Visual question:
The night before Holi, bonfires are lit in a ceremony. Identify this celebration.

Questions and Answers to the March 3 edition of the daily quiz: 1. Time's inaugural Man of the Year in 1927. **Ans: Charles Lindbergh**
2. A stylistic trademark of the magazine from among the following - the prominent red border, the vibrant yellow back cover, or the centre-aligned typeface. **Ans: Red border**
3. The famous/infamous figures from the list, who has never been on the cover of Time: Adolf Hitler, Mahatma Gandhi, Joseph Stalin, Che Guevara. **Ans: Trick question - all four have appeared**
4. Name of the magazine's annual list of world's most influential individuals. **Ans: Time 100**
5. The female star who became the first Indian actor to appear on the magazine's cover. **Ans: Parveen Babi**
6. The title of the 1966 cover of the magazine. **Ans: Is God dead?**
7. The magazine listed a non-human entity — a machine received the honour in 1982 **Ans: Personal computer**
8. Name the political couple who were exiled in 1949 after a coup. Ans: Chiang Kai-Shek and his wife Soong Mei-ling
Visual: The writer of this 2019 cover story. **Ans: Journalist Aatish Taseer**
Early Birds: Sonali Das| Sunil Madhavan| Tamal Biswas

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know Your English

S. Upendran

"I say - why do a lot of parents in our country force their children to write with their right hand?"

"I wouldn't know why they...."

"....my cousin's daughter, for example, is a natural left hander. But my cousin doesn't let her write with that hand. Every time the poor child uses her left hand, my cousin hits her on the knuckles."

"The poor kid!"

"What's wrong with us Indians? Why do we dislike left handers?"

"It's not just the Indians. Even the Europeans were prejudiced against left handers. The English language, for example, discriminates against left handers."

"What are you talking about?"

"Just look at the words and expressions associated with the word 'left'. Many of them are not at all complimentary."

"Can you give me an example?"

"The Chairman paid me a left handed compliment."

"Isn't a left handed compliment a real compliment?"

"No, it isn't. It may seem like a compliment, but what you are actually doing is insulting the person."

"In other words, it's a false compliment."

"Exactly!"

"Can you give me another expression where...."

"....out in the left field. This is an informal expression mainly used in American English and it means strange or unusual. For example, some of the ideas that my boss comes up with are way out in left field."

"In other words he comes up with crazy ideas?"

"I guess you could say that."

"How about this example? My cousin Subbu is out in left field. Nobody takes anything he says seriously."

"When the expert rose to speak, I thought he would make suggestions which were far out in left field. On the contrary, the suggestions he made were very practical."

"O.K, O.K. You have given me two expressions with the word 'left' which aren't very complimentary. They show some prejudice against left handers. Now, give me some words, will you?"

"How about the word 'sinister'?"

"Sinister! What does the word have to do with the word 'left'?"

"First of all, the word is pronounced 'sinister' with the stress on the first syllable. Do you know what 'sinister' means?"

"Of course I do. Doesn't it mean 'evil' or 'threatening'?"

"That's right! When I heard the sinister music I knew that something terrible was going to happen."

"My friend Akash has a sinister smile."

"The villain lived in a sinister looking place."

"O.K, O.K. But tell me, what does the word 'sinister' have to do with left handers?"

"The word 'sinister' is from the Latin 'sinister' meaning 'left'."

"I see. So, over the years the meaning has changed."

"That's right."

Published in The Hindu on October 12, 1999

Word of the day

Brusque:
marked by rude or peremptory shortness

Synonyms: curt, short

Usage: *I was really put off by his brusque remarks.*

Pronunciation:
https://newsth.live/WVrrsF

International Phonetic Alphabet: brʊsk

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

'Dubai authorities stepped in, Indian Embassy absent'

Bhoje Gowda was among 213 travellers, who reached India after services gradually resumed; he says no assistance was forthcoming from the Indian Embassy during the emergency

Darshan Devaiah B.P.
BENGALURU

Janata Dal (Secular) Member of the Legislative Council S.L. Bhoje Gowda, who found himself stranded in Dubai amid the escalating tensions involving the United States, Israel and Iran, has alleged that the Indian Embassy failed to extend any support during the crisis and credited the Dubai administration for ensuring his safe return.

Speaking to reporters after landing in Bengaluru late on Monday night, Mr. Bhoje Gowda said, "It was the Dubai government, and not Indian diplomatic officials, that facilitated the evacuation of Indian passengers when flight operations were disrupted."

He was among 213 travellers, including badminton player P.V. Sindhu, who reached India after services gradually resumed.

S.L. Bhoje Gowda

'No communication'

According to Mr. Bhojegowda, no assistance was forthcoming from the Indian Embassy during the emergency. "It is the responsibility of the Embassy to reach out to citizens in distress and provide necessary help. However, we did not receive any communication from them. The Dubai authorities and Emirates Airlines took decisive action and arranged for our departure," he said.

He pointed out that while he could rely on personal contacts to manage the situation, many ordinary passengers lacked such access. "I could make calls and coordinate because I know people. But what about travellers who do not have such connections?" he asked, raising concerns over the support mechanisms available to Indians abroad during crisis.

Visa, stay issues

Mr. Bhoje Gowda explained that he was travelling back to Bengaluru from Johannesburg, South Africa, following the death of his elder brother. Dubai was a transit halt on his journey. Upon arrival, he boarded a connecting flight scheduled to depart for Bengaluru.

However, the aircraft remained grounded for over two hours before passengers were informed that the departure had been postponed due to reported bombings.

"The announcement created panic. Within minutes, several flights were cancelled and confusion spread across the airport," he recounted. Passengers seeking to exit the airport were required to possess a valid Dubai visa. Mr. Bhoje Gowda managed to secure a visa on arrival owing to his existing U.S. visa.

The MLC said Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy assisted him in arranging accommodation at a hotel in Dubai. "Just an hour before I reached the hotel, there had been a blast nearby," he said, describing the tense atmosphere.

Constant fear

Recounting the night, Mr. Bhoje Gowda claimed that alarms went off around midnight, prompting guests to move to the basement amid fears of fresh attacks. "Hundreds of people, mostly foreigners, remained there until nearly 3 a.m.," he said.

The following morning, he shifted to a friend's residence, where he said multiple explosions were reported in close proximity.

Meanwhile, P.V. Sindhu on Tuesday posted on X confirming her safe return to Bengaluru. She described the past few days as "intense and uncertain" and expressed gratitude to the ground teams, Dubai authorities, airport personnel and immigration officials for their support. "The compassion and professionalism shown during a difficult time meant a great deal," she wrote.

Triveni, a native of Davangere, recounted her ordeal after being stranded at Abu Dhabi airport amid the disruption of flight services.

Describing the experience as challenging and uncertain, she said "the situation was difficult for passengers as schedules were repeatedly changed and information was limited in the initial hours. However, I appreciate the swift response of the local authorities in Abu Dhabi,the officials were supportive and ensured travellers were guided properly during the disruption".

She also noted that airline staff arranged hotel accommodation and basic necessities for stranded passengers, helping ease anxiety among families waiting to return home.

Ramya, a resident of Bengaluru who had travelled to UAE recently, said her return journey was disrupted after the original flight was cancelled.

"The past two days were somewhat frightening. Our return flight was initially cancelled. On March 2, Etihad arranged an alternative flight for us. As of now, things seem peaceful," she added.

Flight disruptions hit Umrah, Hajj travel amid West Asia tensions

Pilgrims from Bengaluru travel to Saudi Arabia through major transit hubs such as Dubai and Doha, or fly directly to Jeddah

Rishita Khanna
BENGALURU

With current tensions in West Asia disrupting flight operations across key air corridors, families in Bengaluru who had planned their Umrah and Hajj pilgrimage for Ramzan, in some cases as early as eight months in advance, have now cancelled or postponed their trips.

Usually, flight fares from Bengaluru to Jeddah start at around ₹16,000 to ₹25,000 depending on the season.

However, amid cancellations and reduced capacity on key Gulf routes, travellers say fares have surged dramatically, with some one-way tickets alone crossing ₹2 lakh.

A video grab showing passengers stranded at Kempegowda International Airport amid flight disruptions and cancellations in Bengaluru recently, due to tensions in West Asia.

Few reliable options

Nayeem Mohammed, who runs a private agency offering Hajj and Umrah packages, said that several flights have been cancelled or rescheduled, leaving very few reliable options.

He said that only Saudi Arabia Airlines has continued operating regularly on certain sectors, leading to high demand and prices.

"A 15-day Umrah package usually starts at ₹75,000 and can go up to ₹1.5 lakh depending on the airline, hotel category and services included. But now flight tickets alone are costing more than ₹2 lakh per person," he said.

Pilgrims from Bengaluru travel to Saudi Arabia through major transit hubs such as Dubai and Doha, or fly directly to Jeddah, which serves as the main gateway to the holy cities. These hubs connect onward to Riyadh and other destinations.

With disruptions ongoing, passengers are facing uncertainty over confirmed departures and return schedules.

During Ramzan

Speaking to *The Hindu*, several pilgrims said they specifically aim to perform Umrah during Ramzan because it is regarded as the most sacred month in the Islamic calendar.

Aslam Sheik, who had been planning the trip since last Ramzan for his elderly parents, said that while his flights were not officially cancelled, he decided against travelling due to the escalating tensions.

"Earlier, my only concern was arranging the money to complete the payment. Now, with the situation in the region, and since my parents are old, the travel feels risky," Mr. Sheik said.

Cancellations

Others said their flights were cancelled at the last moment. Sahra Bee, originally from Kochi and working in Bengaluru, said she had planned to join her family directly from here. While her family managed to reach Saudi Arabia, she and her husband were unable to travel after their flight was called off.

Other travel hit too

S. Mahalingaiah Manu, vice-president of the Karnataka Tourism Society (KTS), said that tourism agencies roll out summer discount sales in March as families begin planning June-July vacations.

However, Mr. Manu noted that bookings are already slowing, with some travellers cancelling plans and seeking refunds due to the uncertainty.

Mr. Manu added that a significant share of Europe-bound passengers from Bengaluru also transit through Dubai, Doha and Abu Dhabi before connecting to European cities for their travel.

If flights to or from these hubs are reduced because of regional tensions, onward connectivity to Europe tightens, resulting in higher fares even for destinations outside West Asia, Mr. Manu added.

Dubai-bound Emirates returns to Bengaluru; 42 flights cancelled

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

An Emirates flight EK 569 from Bengaluru to Dubai, which departed on Tuesday at 4.30 a.m. from the Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) with 56 passengers on board, returned to the KIA due to closure of airspace in West Asia. "Flight EK 569 to Dubai, which departed at 4.30 a.m. with 56 passengers on board, has been cancelled, and has returned due to closure of airspace," the airport officials told *The Hindu*.

Earlier on Monday, the Bangalore International Airport Ltd. (BIAL) stated that Emirates would operate an A388 aircraft from Dubai to Bengaluru, and that it would return to the UAE. "Emirates to operate A388 tomorrow early morning EK 568/569 SIBT 0240 SOBT 0430 departure restricted only up to DXB only for UAE nationals and resident permit holders," the BIAL announced.

Planes parked at Terminal 3 of Dubai International Airport. The reason cited for return of Dubai-bound flight EK 569 to KIA was closure of airspace in West Asia. REUTERS

While flight EK 568 landed in Bengaluru, flight EK 569 bound for Dubai took off from KIA at 4.30 a.m., but returned. Flight operations from the West Asia region to Bengaluru, which were suspended since February 28 in light of the ongoing escalation of tension in the region, resumed on Monday night with an Etihad flight from Abu Dhabi landing at the KIA.

Due to airspace restrictions, 42 flights have been cancelled at KIA on Tuesday. The airport officials said 21 arrivals and two departures have been cancelled. The key sectors affected are: Abu Dhabi and Dubai (UAE), Riyadh, Jeddah, Dammam (Saudi Arabia), and Doha (Qatar).

A helpdesk has been set up at Kerbside, Terminal 2, which is managing queries and providing support to passengers. The BIAL stated that it is facilitating assistance, such as ground transport co-ordination, emergency services, and general query handling, until airline representatives take up the task.

Timings
BENGALURU

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 04	
RISE 06:34	SET 18:29
RISE 19:19	SET 06:58
THURSDAY, MAR. 05	
RISE 06:33	SET 18:29
RISE 20:07	SET 07:35
FRIDAY, MAR. 06	
RISE 06:33	SET 18:29
RISE 20:56	SET 08:12

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	33	21
Bengaluru	32	20

Bengaluru Today
32°C The weather will be dry. Day will be little warm. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night also will be slight cool.

© Copyright Skymet Weather 2026
All rights reserved.

THE HINDU
DISCLAIMER: Readers are requested to verify and make appropriate enquiries to satisfy themselves about the veracity of an advertisement before responding to any published in this newspaper. THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., the Publisher & Owner of this newspaper, does not vouch for the authenticity of any advertisement or advertiser or for any of the advertiser's products and/or services. In no event can the Owner, Publisher, Printer, Editor, Director/s, Employees of this newspaper/company be held responsible/liable in any manner whatsoever for any claims and/or damages for advertisements in this newspaper.

Enough stock of dry fruits for Ramzan, but crisis may trigger shortage, say traders

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

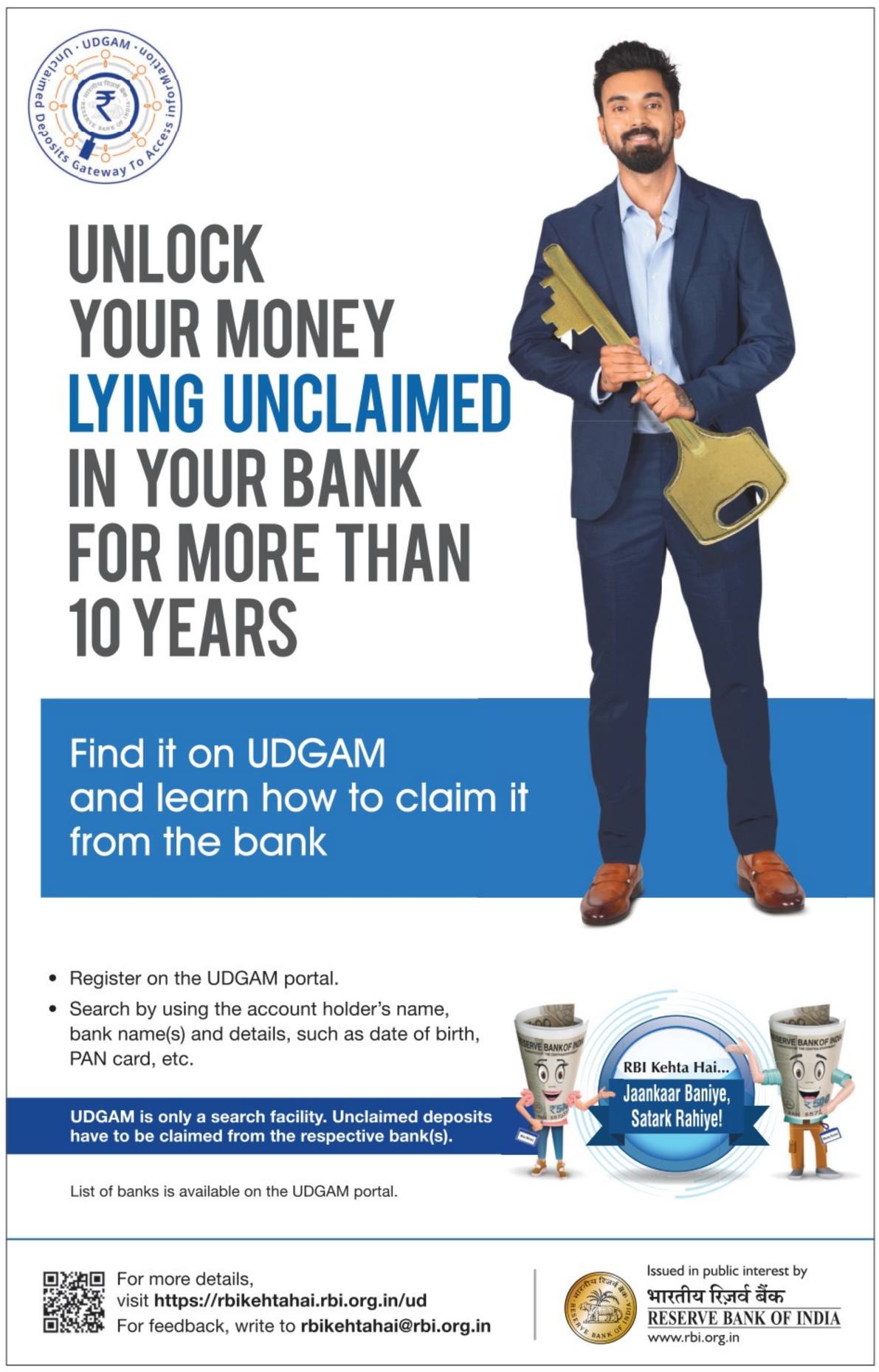
The current tensions in West Asia are expected to hurt the trade of dates and other dry fruits in the country, especially given that the demand is high during the Ramzan month.

Traders in Bengaluru said that they have imported huge stocks for the Ramzan season, if the crisis persists further, it would lead to shortages and price rise. "We currently have enough stock of dates and other dry fruits for about a month. If the war situation in West Asia continues, business will become tougher," said Mohammed Idrees Choudhury, a dry fruits merchant from Russell Market in Bengaluru.

Customers buying dry fruits from a shop at Russell Market, Bengaluru. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"We trade around 10 to 12 tonnes of dates and dried fruits every month. Since it is the month of Ramzan, we have brought in about 60 tonnes of goods in advance. So there is no shortage right now. The current stock will be enough for 20 to 25 days," he said.

Varieties of dates, anjeer (figs), saffron, and other dry fruits are imported from Iran. Compared to other countries, the price of dry fruits imported from Iran is low, they said. Currently, since the fear of war and airspace closures has spread to many countries in West Asia, imports from other countries have been disrupted. "The price of saffron has already crossed ₹2.5 lakh per kg and will go up further. The price of figs is expected to rise from ₹300 to ₹400 per kg," Mr. Choudhury said.



Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Recruitment GO likely to again come up for discussion in Cabinet

Dalit Left community delegation, including Ministers K.H. Muniyappa and R.B. Thimmapur, met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and reportedly exerted pressure for withdrawal of GO

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Under pressure from Dalit Left community leaders, who have criticised a Government Order that has not provided for internal reservation for the recruitment of 56,432 posts, the State government is likely to discuss the reservation issue again during the next Cabinet meeting. The issue seems to have driven a wedge among the Dalit communities in the State.

On Tuesday, a Dalit Left community delegation, including Cabinet Ministers K.H. Muniyappa and R.B. Thimmapur, met Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and is learnt to have exerted pressure for the withdrawal of the notification. It has also sought replacement of Social Welfare Minister H.C. Mahadevappa, accusing him of being "biased" against the internal reservation.

The Dalit Left community has sought the replacement of Social Welfare Minister H.C. Mahadevappa, accusing him of being 'biased' against internal reservation.

Later in the evening, the two Ministers told prespersons that the matter would be discussed during the next Cabinet meeting on Thursday.

Sources said that the two Ministers expressed their disappointment and disapproval of the GO that has asked recruitment authorities/department to stick to the reservation quota that existed before December 2022, which effectively means sticking to the 50% cap and without internal reservation. Sources said that the two Ministers told the Chief Minister that they were kept in the dark and were not told about internal reservation not being part of the GO. Among others present in the delegation were former MLC and KPCC SC cell head Dharmasena, former Minister Anjaneya, and former MP L. Hanumanthaiah.

The Dalit Left community has been upset over the State government's plan to recruit 56,432 posts, one of the biggest recruitment drives in recent decades, without implementing the internal reservation. This comes amid the Karnataka Sub classification Bill that seeks to provide internal reservation in 17% quota getting Governor's assent. The community estimates that SCs and STs will lose 1,129 posts and 2,258 posts, respectively, as per the GO.

Resignation sought

In another development on Tuesday, a number of Dalit Left community organisations that met here decided to seek the resignation of Dr. Mahadevappa, and immediate withdrawal of the GO. A note issued after the meeting said that the government should reconsider recommendations of either the A.J. Sadashiva Commission or the H.N. Nagamohan Das Commission to ascertain backwardness. They also discussed the future action to exert pressure on the government not to hold recruitment without internal reservation.

DKS urges MPs to pressure Centre for nod on raising Almatti dam height

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A file photo of the Almatti dam. The Andhra Pradesh government has written to the Centre not to approve the proposal to raise the dam height to 524.26 metres

Following the Andhra Pradesh government's opposition to Karnataka's proposal to raise the height of the Almatti dam from the present 519.6 metres to 524.26 metres – to facilitate completion of the third phase of the Upper Krishna Project (UKP) – Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar, who also holds the Water Resources portfolio, on Tuesday urged all members of Parliament from Karnataka to exert pressure on the Union government to grant necessary approvals and issue a Gazette notification permitting the State to proceed with the work.

In a letter to the Secretary of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, the Andhra Pradesh government requested the Centre not to issue any notification in favour of Karnataka for raising the dam height, citing that the matter is still under consideration before the Supreme Court.

A.P. and Maharashtra

Speaking to reporters, Mr. Shivakumar said that both Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra governments have raised objections to Karnataka's move. With the Parliament session scheduled to commence on March 10, he appealed to the State's MPs to pressure the Narendra Modi government to expedite the Gazette notification enabling the project to move forward.

The Deputy Chief Minister said Karnataka has already spent ₹20,000 crore on the project, and the State Cabinet has approved the acquisition of 1.33 lakh acres of land, with an estimated expenditure of ₹70,000 crore to be implemented in three phases.

"Being an experienced politician, I did not expect Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu to stoop to this level to stall a project that would increase the water storage capacity from 177 tmcft to 330 tmcft," Mr. Shivakumar remarked.

At Navali

He also stated that Andhra Pradesh is opposing Karnataka's proposed construction of a balancing reservoir at Navali, intended to address the siltation problem at the Tungabhadra reservoir and to utilise 30 tmcft of Tungabhadra water. Mr. Shivakumar added that Mr. Naidu has not been attending meetings convened to discuss the issue. Mr. Shivakumar said he would go to Delhi during the State Budget session and apprise MPs and the Jal Shakti Ministry to seek approval for the UKP-III phase project.

Siddaramaiah writes to Stalin backing renewed Centre-State relations debate

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has written to his Tamil Nadu counterpart M.K. Stalin expressing "strong support" for initiating a national conversation on Union-State relations, underscoring the importance of cooperative federalism in India's constitutional framework.

Mr. Siddaramaiah's letter comes in response to Mr. Stalin's letter dated February 20, 2026, forwarding Part 1 of the report of the high-level committee on Union-State relations. Mr. Stalin had earlier this month tabled the report of the Justice Kurian Joseph High-Level Committee on Union-State Relations in the Tamil Nadu Assembly.

No solitary endeavour

Mr. Siddaramaiah emphasised that it is imperative for all States, irrespective of political affiliations, to join hands in constructive federal dialogue.

"Federal renewal cannot be a solitary endeavour of one or two States; it must emerge as a collective articulation," he said, adding that the objective is "not to weaken the Union but to right-size it, to ensure that national energy is concentrated on genuinely national priorities, while States are trusted with spheres constitutionally entrusted to them."

Common ground: A file photo of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K Stalin with Karnataka counterpart Siddaramaiah.

In a post on X, attaching the letter he addressed to Mr. Stalin, Mr. Siddaramaiah said, "Federalism is not a political demand - it is part of the basic structure of our Constitution. Over the years, increasing centralisation in fiscal and legislative matters has disturbed the delicate balance envisioned by our Constitution makers. States must have the authority and fiscal space to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to them."

He said that States must have the authority and fiscal space to fulfil the responsibilities entrusted to them. "India's strength lies in cooperative federalism, constitutional trust, and respect for diversity," he said.

Institutional platform

Urging the Union government to provide an institutional platform - such as a revitalised Inter-State Council - for all States to deliberate and restore balance in our federal structure, he said, "Karnataka stands ready to engage constructively in strengthening India's democratic and federal framework."

In his letter, the Chief Minister expressed concern over what he called "phenomenon of incremental centralisation" that has altered the federal balance through expansive interpretations of the Concurrent List, conditional fiscal transfers, centrally designed schemes with diminishing State flexibility, and procedural bottlenecks in Governor's assent.

He stated that what was intended as cooperative federalism has increasingly resembled "coercive federalism."

He further said, drawing a historical context, "As you have rightly observed, our Constitution was framed under exceptional historical compulsions. The Constituent Assembly, animated by the anxieties of Partition and integration, consciously crafted a Union with unitary features. Yet, as B.R. Ambedkar reminded the Assembly, India would be a "Union of States," not a unitary state in disguise. Federalism was not an act of administrative convenience but a structural guarantee against concentration of power."

CM rubbishes charges of Shivakumar loyalists being spied upon

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday rubbished allegations of spying and phone tapping made by Leader of Opposition in the Assembly R. Ashok and JD(S) leader and Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel H.D. Kumaraswamy as "desperate statements" of a "jobless Opposition."

Mr. Ashok had alleged that Mr. Siddaramaiah was using government machinery to spy on legislators associated with his deputy D.K. Shivakumar, amid escalating tension over possible leadership change. He had told reporters that Mr. Siddaramaiah had formed a team led by an officer to spy on MLAs who were backing Mr. Shivakumar, calling it an "invisible Special Investigation Team" that was also tapping phones.

Accusing Mr. Ashok and Mr. Kumaraswamy of trying to constantly curdle his relationship with Mr. Shivakumar since the Congress formed the government in 2023, he said that their comments would have "no effect on our relationship, which is like milk and honey."

"None of our MLAs are supporters of me or Mr. Shivakumar. All are supporters of the Congress. Within the framework of party discipline, they all have the freedom to express their opinions individually and have meals together," he said, referring to all the buzz around dinner meetings of loyalists of either camps.

None of our MLAs are supporters of me or Mr. Shivakumar. All are supporters of the Congress. Within the framework of party discipline, they all have the freedom to express their opinions individually and have meals together

SIDDARAMAIAH,
Chief Minister

Endorsing the Chief Minister's views, Mr. Shivakumar said that their relation was indeed cordial. "Not only in 2023, but our relationship will be like milk and honey even in 2028," he told reporters.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH

D VENKATESAN (60), Retired Senior Supervisor, Despatch, The Hindu, M M Nagar passed away on 02nd March-2026. Address: 18-B, Vijayalakshmi Nagar, Venkadapuram, Singaperumal Koil-603204. 8838340591

REMEMBRANCE

IN FOND REMEMBRANCE

Sri. K.Kuppuswamy Naidu
Founder & Managing Director
Born: 13-03-1925 Died: 04-03-2007
Your pioneering effort & fighting spirit will always remain our guiding force
R.Vijay Krishna
S/o K.Rajaiah, Founder Director
Chamundesware Studio & Lab. Pvt. Ltd.
Grandsons & loyal workers

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES
To dedicate a space in this section, Please contact:
Bengaluru: 98455 29981, 080 - 22071826
Hubballi: 0836 - 2338600
Mangaluru: 0824 - 2417575, from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Rate for Karnataka:
Minimum: Rs. 320/- for 2 lines.
Extra line: Rs. 160/-
B/W Display: Rs. 95/- per sq.cm;
Colour Display: Rs. 105/- per sq.cm
For Placing Advertisements Online log on to www.thehinduads.com
DONATE EYES - GIFT SIGHT

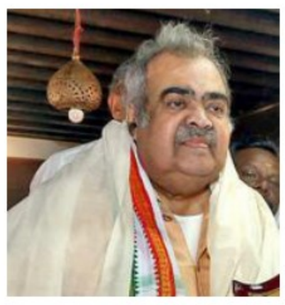
DEPARTMENT OF MINORITY WELFARE
Directorate of Minorities
No.16C, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Bhavan, Miller Tank Bund Road, Vasanthnagar, Bengaluru - 52.
Website: https://dom.karnataka.gov.in
Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Parsi
ANNOUNCEMENT OF RESIDENTIAL COACHING FOR UPSC PRELIMS SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR THE YEAR 2025-26
Online Application
▪ Applications are called for 04 Months Residential **UPSC Prelims Support Programme** Coaching through a reputed institute at Haj Bhavan, Bengaluru for the students belonging to religious minority community for the year 2025-26.
Timeline
Date for submission of applications starts from: 04.03.2026.
Last Date for submission of applications : 09.03.2026.
Eligibility
▪ Students must be residence of Karnataka State.
▪ Students must be belonging to religious minority community (Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh and Parsi).
▪ Students must be cleared UPSC/KAS Preliminary Exam in previous notifications.
▪ **Age limit:** Must have completed 21 years and below 35 years. (As on the last date of application).
Instructions for Applicants
▪ Applicants are advised to download the application form available on the website of the Directorate of Minorities at https://dom.karnataka.gov.in and submit the application as per the guidelines.
▪ For more details contact your concerned District Minority Officer, Minority Welfare Department and also contact Helpline Number: 8277799990.
Date: 04.03.2026
Place: Bengaluru
Sd/-
Director
Directorate of Minorities, Bengaluru
DIPR/CP/5974/MAA/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(Public Works Department)
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Public Works Department, Division: Yadgir.
GSTIN:29BLR002252F1DR
No.EE/PWD/Divn/YDG/TS-1/e-Tender/2025-26/ 3234, Dated:03.03.2026
Short Term e-Tender Notification
1) Details of works: On behalf of Governor of Karnataka as per KTPP Amendment 1999-2000 Act 2000 Standard Bid Document KW-3 Karnataka Public Works Department invited item Rate Tender under KPPP Portal in Two Cover System from Eligible Agency/Contractors for following works Under 4059 CMIDP -TSP for the year 2025-26 Under Shorapur Taluka-(1)33752 work Tender Called **2) Amount Put to Tender:** Maximum Rs.100.00 Lakhs **3) Contractor Eligible Details:** Civil Class-III & Above **4) Tender Procesing Fee and EMD Details:** Tender Fee, EMD & Period as per kppp portal, **5) Last Date & Time for Tender queries/ Clarification:** 06.03.2026 (Upto 17.30 hrs) **6) Last Date & Time for Reciept of the tender in e-KPPP portal:** 09.03.2026 (Upto 16.00 hrs) **7) Date & Time of Opening of the Tender/Technical Bid:** 11.03.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) **8) Date & Time of Opening of the Financial Bid:** 13.03.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) **9) For More Details Contact:** Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division : Yadgir. **10) Website Address:**https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in
NOTE: Any Corrections / Changes will be updated in the kppp Portal only
DIP/YDG/564/KSMC&A/2025-26
Sd/- Executive Engineer, PWD Division, Yadgir.

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT, SRI. G. GOPALAPPA, SRI. G. SATHISH, son of late Gundappa AND SRI. YALLAPPA, son of Late Chikkamuniyappa, are the owners of the properties described in schedule hereunder.
It is brought to the notice of the general public that, our client intended to purchase the schedule properties, situated at Bendiganahalli Village, Attibele Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District, from the above said respective owners. Any person/s having any right, title, interest or claim against or to the Schedule Property or any part thereof by way of inheritance, mortgage, sale, conveyance, MOU, Agreement to Sell, transfer, lease deed, tenancy, license, lien, charge, trust, maintenance, easement, gift, exchange, possession, adverse possession or otherwise howsoever are hereby required to submit the same in writing along with documentary proof to the undersigned at their office at No.428, 1st Floor, 25th cross, 24th Main Rd, 2nd Sector, HSR Layout, Bengaluru, Karnataka 560102, within 10 days from the date of publication hereof, failing which our client shall proceed without any reference to such claim and the same, if any, will be considered as waived.

Survey No.	Extent		Name of the Owner	Boundaries for the total extent in each Sy. No.			
	Acres	Guntas		East	West	North	South
5	01	00	G.Gopalappa	Road and Remaining portion of Sy No.5	Land in Sy. No. 4 and Remaining portion of Sy No.5.	Alibommasandra Village boundary	Road and land in Sy. No. 6 of Bendiganahalli Village.
	00	33.08	G.Sathish				
	00	16.12	G.Sathish				
	00	22	G.Gopalappa				
	00	22	Yallappa				
Total	03	14.04					

Dated this 28 day of February 2026, at Bangalore
M/s. Legal Nexus, Advocates and Consultants,
No.428, 1st Floor, 25th cross,
24th Main Rd, 2nd Sector, HSR Layout,
Bengaluru, Karnataka 560102
Ph No.080 4959 5965



K.P. Unnikrishnan

Former Union Minister, who negotiated with Saddam, passes away

The Hindu Bureau
KOZHIKODE

Former Union Minister and senior Congress leader K.P. Unnikrishnan, a lifelong socialist and a key figure in national politics in the 80s and 90s, passed away in Kozhikode on Tuesday. He was 89.

During his stint as Union Minister for Telecommunications and Shipping in the V.P. Singh Cabinet from 1989 to 1990, Mr. Unnikrishnan played an instrumental role in the massive evacuation of Indians from Kuwait during the Iraqi invasion. Despite the Cabinet advising against it, he went to the hiding place of Iraq's then President Saddam Hussein and successfully negotiated their return.

He has the rare distinction of representing a Lok Sabha constituency for the longest period in Kerala's political history. He was the MP for Vadakara in Kozhikode from 1971 to 1996, that too as the nominee of three parties.

He is survived by wife, Amrita, and two daughters. The final rites will be held on Wednesday.

One-man panel begins probe into TTD ghee-tender irregularities

Retired IAS officer Dinesh Kumar begins investigation to examine decision-making process, procedural deviations and chain of responsibility flagged by CBI-led SIT

The Hindu Bureau
TIRUMALA

The commission has been mandated to submit its report within 45 days. FILE PHOTO

The one-man commission constituted by the State government to probe alleged irregularities in the relaxation and enforcement of ghee-tender norms began its work on Tuesday, marking the start of a high-stakes inquiry into administrative accountability within the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams.

The panel, headed by retired IAS officer Dinesh Kumar, formally commenced proceedings after offering prayers at the hill shrine in Tirumala.

Mr. Kumar, who arrived in Tirupati on Monday evening, held preliminary consultations and initiated steps to set up an operational office for the inquiry. The annexe building at Sri Padmavati Rest House in Tirupati is likely to serve as the commission's headquarters during the course of the probe.

Highlighting the seriousness attached to the issue, the government appointed a team of senior retired officials to assist the commission. They include former IFS officer Munindra, Assistant Secretary-to-Government Siva Kumar and RTGS Deputy CEO Madhuri. TTD deputed its Assistant Executive Officer-Properties N. Ravi as liaison officer to coordinate and provide logistical support.

The inquiry gains significance in the backdrop of a self-contained note submitted by the CBI-led Special Investigation Team, which pointed to serious administrative lapses and procedural deviations in the handling of ghee-procurement tenders.

The commission has begun examining official records and documents related to the tender process.

Sources said the panel is likely to summon and record statements from former TTD chairpersons and senior officials, apart from those associated with the marketing, procurement and godown wings whose roles were cited in the SIT findings. As per the mandate, the commission is required to submit its report within 45 days.

A.P. launches major project for wildlife conservation

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

In a major initiative to reduce human wildlife conflict and strengthen conservation, Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for Forest and Environment Pawan Kalyan on Tuesday launched the Hanuman Project in Vijayawada.

The project, Healing and Nurturing Units for Monitoring, Aid and Nursing of Wildlife (Hanuman), is designed as a scientific and technology driven intervention to protect wildlife and residents of forest fringe villages. As part of the initiative, over 100 specially designed rapid response and rescue vehicles were flagged off. Seven ambulances too were deployed for treating injured animals.

Kerala receives over a dozen flights from West Asia following partial reopening of UAE airspace

Dhinesh Kallungal
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

The partial reopening of the UAE Flight Information Region, the designated airspace managed by the UAE General Civil Aviation Authority, along with the operational Omani airspace and the Jeddah Flight Information Region, which covers the western airspace of Saudi Arabia, has provided respite to stranded passengers in West Asia, with airlines operating special services with military approval.

Kerala received over a dozen flights from different locations in West Asia, mainly carrying stranded passengers. SpiceJet also announced special flights to key cities in India from Fujairah, including to Kochi on Tuesday.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, a senior Air India source confirmed that the airline has received permission to operate special flights on a case-by-case basis with military approval.

The airline operated the first Indian carrier flight from Dubai to New Delhi amid the ongoing crisis, bringing back 149 stranded passengers. It has also received approval to operate flights from Sharjah and Abu Dhabi. These are not scheduled commercial services, but special flights.

Air India Express has announced that it resumed full-fledged flight operations to and from Muscat on Tuesday. An Air Arabia flight from Thiruvananthapuram to Abu Dhabi also departed at 4.30 p.m. on Tuesday.

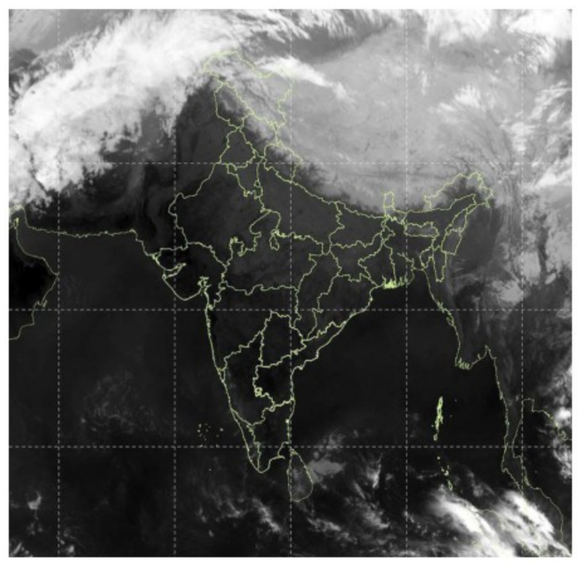
Emirates flight returns

Meanwhile, an Emirates flight from Bengaluru to Dubai, which departed at 4.30 a.m. on Tuesday with 56 passengers on board, returned due to airspace restrictions. Flights to and from Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia remain suspended for most parts of the day.

The primary focus of the special services to the UAE and the scheduled flights to Muscat and Saudi Arabia is to facilitate the movement of stranded passengers.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Wednesday: Hot and Humid weather very likely at isolated places over Gujarat State and Konkan & Goa.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	31.5	22.0	Kozhikode	—	35.8	25.4
Ahmedabad	—	38.0	20.9	Kurnool	—	39.0	23.7
Aizawl	003.6	29.6	15.3	Lucknow	—	31.3	15.5
Allahabad	—	32.2	14.4	Madurai	—	37.0	20.5
Bengaluru	—	32.7	20.0	Mangaluru	—	33.2	20.8
Chandigarh	—	29.4	13.2	New Delhi	—	31.6	15.1
Chennai	—	31.7	21.5	Patna	—	31.2	18.2
Coimbatore	—	34.8	21.6	Port Blair	—	30.4	23.0
Dehradun	—	30.5	12.1	Puducherry	—	31.2	22.1
Gangtok	000.2	13.0	10.7	Pune	—	35.5	17.4
Goa	—	31.6	23.3	Raipur	—	35.8	20.2
Guwahati	—	30.8	17.5	Ranchi	—	29.9	14.0
Hubballi	—	—	—	Shillong	—	21.0	8.9
Hyderabad	—	36.0	21.2	Shimla	—	23.2	12.4
Imphal	—	26.1	13.0	Srinagar	—	22.3	2.1
Jaipur	—	33.9	18.2	Thiruvananthapuram	—	32.1	24.0
Kochi	—	31.0	26.4	Tiruchi	—	35.1	21.6
Kohima	—	21.7	11.0	Vijayawada	—	—	—
Kolkata	—	33.1	20.1	Visakhapatnam	—	33.6	25.2

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.62	..68	40	... 204	...139	
Bengaluru	...6	..31	30	... 217	...136	
Chennai	.18	..10	29	... 164	95	
Delhi	.43	..34	29	... 267	...389	
Hyderabad	...4	9	43	... 113	...126	
Kolkata	...7	104	31	... 254	.....—	
Lucknow	...9	..36	58	... 176	...155	
Mumbai	...9	2	26	... 169	...124	
Pune	..—	..54	44	... 158	...156	
Visakhapatnam	.34	104	15	 83	...140	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Sirsa, Haryana recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 381 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir recorded a healthy AQI score of 32

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department
Office of the Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal.
Phone & Fax No : 08539-220054 email: eemidnkst@rediffmail.com

No:EE/MI&GWDD/Koppal/PB/TP/2025-26/5418 Dated: 02-03-2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

The Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal district invites tenders from the eligible tenderers registered civil contractors as per standard bid documents KW-6 on KPP portal for 02 no. of tender works pertaining to Raichur district The Approximate amount for the mentioned works Ranges between **Rs.2100.00 Lakhs** to **3400.00 Lakhs**. **Two cover** tender procedure as per rule 28 of the **KTTP** act shall be followed.

For more information the contractor can contact the under signed during office hours and all information regarding tenders can be had from website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/** The tender documents can be downloaded from the above website address on or after **04-03-2026**. Last date & time for receipt of tender is **20-03-2026 time 17.30 hours**, Pre bid meeting will be held on **12-03-2026, 11.00 Hours** at division office koppal, Date & time for opening of technical bid **23-03-2026 time 11.00 hours**, date and time for opening of financial bid **25-03-2026 time 11.00 hours** (If technical bid sanction is accorded by the competent authority).

Sd/-Executive Engineer
Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department Division Koppal.

DIPR/Koppal/723/DeshpandePublicity/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು ಮತ್ತು ನೈರ್ಮಲ್ಯ ವಿಭಾಗ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಕಾಇಂ:ಗ್ರಾಕುನೀ&ನೈವಿ:ದಾ:ಕಿಇಂ–1:ಹೊ.ಗು.ಸಿ:2025–26/1825 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 02/03/2026

ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು & ನೈರ್ಮಲ್ಯ ವಿಭಾಗ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಇವರ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯೂಮೆಂಟ್ ನಿಯಮದನ್ವಯ ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಸೇವಾ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯಪಾಲರ ಪರವಾಗಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತ ಅರ್ಹ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆ/ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಯಿಂದ kppp ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಕುಡಿಯುವ ನೀರು & ನೈರ್ಮಲ್ಯ ವಿಭಾಗ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ವೃತ್ತ ಕಛೇರಿ, ವಿಭಾಗ ಮತ್ತು ಉಪ–ವಿಭಾಗಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿಗಳ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಹೊರಸಂಪನ್ಮೂಲ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಯ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಪಡೆಯುವ ಸಲುವಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹ ಏಜೆನ್ಸಿಯನ್ನು ನೇಮಿಸಲು ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 16–03–2026ರ ಸಂಜೆ 17–00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 17–03–2026ರ ಸಂಜೆ 17–15 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ
ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 20–03–2026ರ ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11–00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ

ಸದರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಮತ್ತು ನಿಬಂಧನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಕಛೇರಿಯ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 08192–262126 ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ ಅಥವಾ http//kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ವಾಸಾಇ/ಡಿವಿಜಿ/788/ಕೆಎಸ್‌ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್,
ಗ್ರಾ.ಕು.ನೀ & ನೈ. ವಿಭಾಗ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ.

UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES BANGALORE NAAC A+ Accredited
Estate Office, Naik Bhavan, GKVK, Bengaluru-560065
Phone: GKVK : 2330153-250, Direct : 23332765
Email: eo@uasbangalore.edu.in Website:www.uasbangalore.edu.in

No. EO/SPO/e-Proc/20/2025-26 Date:02.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through e-Procurement Portal Only)

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru has invited Tender in the prescribed form as per the Standard tender document KG-1,and KG-2, from the reputed firms for the procurement of Equipment's.

Blank Tender Documents can be downloaded from **kppp.karnataka.gov.in**, Last date and time for uploading the tender on**11.03.2026 up to 4.00 p.m.** The Technical bid will be opened on **13.03.2026 at 10:30 a.m.** The Financial bid will be opened on**16.03.2026 at 10:30 a.m.** in the Tender Committee room of Estate Office. Further details can be had from the office of the undersigned during working hours and also refer UAS Website: **www.uasbangalore.edu.in**.Help Desk- 91-8046010000, +91-8068948777 **support@eprochelpdesk.com**.The University reserves the right to accept or reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reasons

Sd/-
ESTATE OFFICER

DIPR/CP/JA/5969/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
(ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ತೆರಿಗೆಗಳ ಇಲಾಖೆ)
ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ತೆರಿಗೆ ಜಂಟಿ ಆಯುಕ್ತರವರ ಕಚೇರಿ(ಆಡಳಿತ)
ವಿಭಾಗೀಯ ಸರಕು & ಸೇವಾ ತೆರಿಗೆ ಕಚೇರಿ, ಧಾರವಾಡ.
ದೂರವಾಣಿ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: 0836–2210172

ಸಂ:ವಾತೆಜಂಆ(ಆ)/ವಿಸಸೇತೆವಿ/ಧಾ/ಧ.ಸಿ&ಸ್ವಸಿ/2025–26/ಬಿ–1186 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 03–03–2026

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ತೆರಿಗೆಗಳ ಜಂಟಿ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು(ಆಡಳಿತ), ಸರಕು ಮತ್ತು ಸೇವಾ ತೆರಿಗೆ ಕಚೇರಿ, ಧಾರವಾಡ ವಿಭಾಗದ ಹಾವೇರಿ, ಗದಗ, ಕಾರವಾರ, ಮತ್ತು ಧಾರವಾಡ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಕಚೇರಿಗಳಿಗೆ 10 ಸ್ವಚ್ಛತಾ ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿಗಳು ಮತ್ತು 12 ಭದ್ರತಾ ಸಿಬ್ಬಂದಿಗಳ ಸೇವೆ ಪೂರೈಕೆಗೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ **ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:JCCT/A/DGSTO/DWD/S.G&H.K/2025-26/CTD/2025-26/SE0106** ದಿನಾಂಕ: **03–03–2026** ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಜಾಲತಾಣ **https://eproc.karnataka.gov.in**/ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಹಿತಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **18–03–2026 ಸಮಯ ಸಂಜೆ: 17:00 P.M.**

ಸಹಿ/– ವಾಣಿಜ್ಯ ತೆರಿಗೆಗಳ ಜಂಟಿ ಆಯುಕ್ತರು (ಆಡಳಿತ)
ವಿಭಾಗೀಯ ಸರಕು ಮತ್ತು ಸೇವಾ ತೆರಿಗೆ ಕಚೇರಿ, ಧಾರವಾಡ.

ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಇ/ಧಾರವಾಡ/1306/ದೇಶಪಾಂಡೆಪಬ್ಲಿಸಿಟಿ/2025–26

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE, KAMPLI
Email:apmckampli2023@gmail.com Contact:08394-250232

No.APMC/kampli/Devt/Tender/389/2023-24 Date:27-02-2026.

E-Tender Notification (Call-2)

Agricultural Produce Market Committee, Kampli invites E-tender Work sanction under the Market Development Fund By Agricultural Marketing Board for Development Works. Registered Contractor under the Department of Public Works and Inland Water Transport under KPPP System Through Standard Tender Document-KW4 (With Latest Amendment) Item wise two cover are invited separately through e-procurement. For more details Contact the Office in office hours or visit Website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Work INDENT NO: APMC/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT710/ CALL-2. **Tender Amount Rs. In Rs:** 1,17,29,990-51 + GST. **EMD:** 2,00,000.00. **Period of completion:** 175 Days Excluding monsoon

Time Schedule: 1.Tender Pre-Bid Meeting: **Date:12.03.2026, 11-00 Am.** 2.Last Date for submission the Tender documents: **Date:16.03.2026, 4-00 pm.** 3.Opening of Technical Bid: **Date:17.03.2026 4-30 pm.** 4.Opening of Financial Bid: **Date: 30.03.2026 11-00 am.**

Sd/- Secretary APMC. Kampli **Sd/- President APMC. Kampli**

DIPR/Ballari/1074/KSMCA/2025-26

Government of Karnataka - Zilla Panchayat
Office of The Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru
Ph No.: 08262-220936 e-mail: zpedckm@rediffmail.com
Tender Notice No.: 44/2025-26/2408 Date: 02.03.2026

Tender Notice

Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru invites Tenders through K.P.P.P. related to works of Chikkamagaluru, Koppa, Kalasa, Mudigere, N.R. Pura and Sringeri Taluks in Chikkamagaluru District. Max. Approx. Amount put to Tender is Rs. 80.00 lakhs and Min. Approx. amount is Rs. 20.00 lakhs. Details of capability to undertake or of having implemented the works should be attached as per Standard Tender Document KW–1,2&3. For the said works the documents downloaded from K.P.P.P. can be filled and uploaded from 02.03.2026 to 13.03.2026 up to 5.30 PM. Technical Bid will be opened on 16.03.2026 at 5.05 PM. If possible the Financial Bid will be opened on 20.03.2026 at 11.00 AM. If this day is declared as holiday then the next day will be considered. Notice can be read on www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in Further details can be obtained by contacting the case worker during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Chikkamagaluru.

DIPR/CKM/KSMCA/25-26/180/1930

TRAUMA AND EMERGENCY CARE CENTRE
(Bangalore Medical College & Research Institute)
Office of the Special Officer, Bangalore
Website: www.teccbmcri.karnataka.gov.in | Tele:080-26802725
Email: sploffrtcc@gmail.com

No.:TCC/Tender/P-Notification/02/2025-26 Date:02.03.2026

E -TENDER NOTICE

E-Tender are invited through KPP-procurement portal for outsource services for BMCRI Trauma & Emergency Care Center, Bangalore.

Sl. No.	Tender Notification No & Date	Details	Schedule
01	DME/2025-26/IND2119	**Supply And Installation of Access Control Doors & Other Medical Equipments**	➢ Commencement date for uploading of E-tenders:- **02/03/2026** ➢ E-Tender Pre-Bid meeting:- **07/03/2026, at 3:00 PM** ➢ Last date for uploading the E-tenders:- **16/03/2026 upto 5:00 PM** ➢ Date of Opening of E-tender Technical Bid:- **18/03/2026 at 11:00 AM**

Tender details can be viewed, downloaded and applied only through the KPPP mode only website: **https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** For further details contact Special Officer, BMCRI Trauma & Emergency Care Center, Victoria Hospital Campus, K.R Road, Bangalore. Ph: 080-26802727, email: sploffrtcc@gmail.com, website: https://teccbmcri.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/-
Special Officer,
BMCRI Trauma & Emergency Care Center

DIPR/CP/JA/5961/2025-26

KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
(CIN : U40109KA1999SGC025521)

No: CEE/Tr(OP)ZB/SEE(O)/AE-1/F-432.433,434/2025-26/11019-20 Date: 27.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL MODE ONLY)

KPTCL invites bid against the following enquiries;

1. Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/T(O)Z/BZ/PTK-32/2025-26/Allimaranahalli Call-3 for Providing additional 1x8MVA 66/11kV Power Transformer & construction of one no. of 66kV line terminal bay for terminating second circuit line at 66/11kV **Allimaranahalli** sub-station in Kanakapura Taluk, Bengaluru South district and Making LILO arrangement to the existing 66/11V Allimaranahalli sub-station by stringing 2nd circuit line from tap point of 66/11kV Allimanahalli sub-station to 66kV Ramanagara - Kanakapura SC line to 66/11kV Allimaranahalli sub-station on the existing DC towers using Coyote ACSR conductor for a distance of 0.831kms. Including supply of all materials/ equipment **(excluding 1x8MVA power transformer & 11kV switchgear)** and erection (including Civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing and commissioning on **Partial Turnkey Basis.**

2. Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/T(O)Z/BZ/PTK-33/2025-26 for Rectification of damaged Tower No: 41 of 220kV Bidadi-Somanahalli DC line at M/s. Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages Pvt Ltd., Bidadi Industrial Area Limits Including supply of all materials/ equipment and erection (including Civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing and commissioning on **Partial Turnkey Basis** on DCW basis by M/s. Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages Pvt Ltd.,

3. Enquiry No: KPTCL/CEE/T(O)Z/BZ/PTK-34/2025-26 for Upgradation of protection system at 220kV BWSSB, Harohalli sub-station in Harohalli taluk, Bengaluru South district including supply of all materials/ equipment and erection (including Civil works) of all materials/equipments, testing and commissioning on **Total Turnkey Basis** on DCW basis by M/s. BWSSB

The Bids will be received through electronic tender mode only. The detailed notification regarding the subject enquires in the E-tendering process can be obtained by logging into KPP Portal website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in on or after 10.03.2026.** Other details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Electy)., Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, A.R.Circle, Bengaluru - 560 009

GREATER CHENNAI CORPORATION
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
SWM.C.No.A7 / 0655 / 2026

E-Tender Notice

E-Tender is invited by Superintending Engineer (SWM) in Solid Waste Management Department

Description	Estimate cost	EMD Amount
Selection of an agency for Moving and Levelling of Municipal Solid Waste at Kodungaiyur Dumping Ground, by deployment of vehicle, equipments and manpower for a period of six months	**Rs. 9.71 Crores**	**Rs. 9.71 lakhs**
Tender submission online last date	**16 - 04 - 2026 at 3.00 pm**	
Tender opening date	**17 - 04 - 2026 at 4.00 pm**	

Tenderer can view and download the details of E-Tender from website **http://tntenders.gov.in** and may participate in tender EMD Amount should be pay online payment through E-tender portal details given in Tender Document

DIPR / 1530 / Tender / 2026

Superintending Engineer (SWM)

READ
FRONTLINE
LEADING THE DEBATE SINCE 1984
EVERY FORTNIGHT.
TO SUBSCRIBE, VISIT
www.thehindugroup.in/subscribe

A reboot

Canada under Carney is undoing the damage of the Trudeau years

India and Canada have had to take a painstaking path to reset ties ruptured over the Nijjar killing in 2023. But this week saw a big step forward, with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney's India visit and his talks with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The process began last year, after the exit of former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who had publicly accused India of involvement in the killing, and by Mr. Carney's entry and invitation to Mr. Modi to attend the G-7 outreach in Kananaskis, Canada. The two countries have since demonstrated that they can resolve deep differences on security issues; NSA Ajit Doval's Ottawa visit last month, previously unthinkable, saw a closer understanding of each other's positions on the Khalistan issue and foreign interference. High Commissioners were appointed in both countries, and the two sides restarted discussions on the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and cooperation in other spheres. Mr. Carney's visit and rapport with Mr. Modi have also been forged due to geopolitical factors. U.S. President Donald Trump's unilateral moves on trade and tariffs, and foreign policy, have pushed most global players to diversify their engagements and essay partners they may not have in the past. In a more realpolitik phase, India and Canada have restored ties with China, although fraught with misgivings over China's trade and supply chain control. Finally, Mr. Carney's January speech at Davos, exhorting "middle powers" and multilateralism against great power moves, resonated in India. It is pertinent that Mr. Carney, who landed in India just as the U.S.-Israel attacked Iran, continued with his meetings in India before travelling to Australia and Japan.

In Delhi, India and Canada agreed to the terms of reference for the CEPA, with the aim to conclude the trade deal this year, and a 10-year agreement for Canadian uranium supplies for Indian nuclear reactors. They also decided to build partnerships in renewable energy, technology and innovation, while establishing a defence dialogue. But turning the chapter on a history of bad blood that has bedevilled ties since the 1970s, mainly over the Khalistan issue, however, will need more clarity and trust. Just before the meet in Delhi, media reports in Canada, clearly fuelled by Canadian intelligence inputs of Indian links to the Nijjar case and other instances of foreign interference, indicated an internal tussle within the Canadian government on these issues. While the joint statement skirted around the issues in India-Canada accusations over extremist groups and transnational repression, these will come to the fore again if left unaddressed, especially as Canadian authorities move towards the trial in the Nijjar case. A successful partnership will require more honest conversations and mutual respect in public dealings on differences between them.

Safety last

Explosives units flout rules for profit, putting workers at risk

India's high-risk industries typically have a poor safety record. They operate in the margins, employ poorly paid unskilled workers, are characterised by unsafe working practices, and function under poor regulatory oversight. The explosive handling industry is a glaring example of such a high-risk industry. In October 2025, a devastating explosion at Sri Ganapathi Grand Fireworks in Andhra Pradesh's Konaseema district, which killed 10 people, led authorities to frame new safety norms and standard operating procedures. But it would seem that few of these were followed by Sri Surya Firecrackers at Vetlapalem village in Kakinada district, where an explosion on Saturday killed all 20 people present on the site. Another disturbing fact is that both units were owned by the same person. The Vetlapalem unit had been ordered to cease operations in January and had, in any case, far exceeded its permitted daily quota of explosives and workforce numbers after securing a large temple festival order. Nagpur was conceived as a hub of India's explosives making - with about four major public sector units supplying explosives, detonators and related materials for defence and industrial uses. The area's green cover provided camouflage with good connectivity with the rest of India. Today, nearly a dozen such private factories function in the Bazargaon area of Nagpur district. Most of the workers are women on low wages. Often drawn from farmlands acquired for factories, the workforce is barely educated and insufficiently trained.

On Sunday, a blast at SBL Energy factory, Nagpur, killed 19 workers, most of them women. More than 20 lives have been lost in the past two years in half a dozen accidents in these units, including two at Solar Explosives, the largest unit, whose owner received the Padma Shri this year. Locals point out that the political connections of factory owners often invite the light hand of law enforcement. Ironically, the Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organisation, the regulator, is headquartered in Nagpur. In an example of lax supervision, several PESO officials faced a CBI inquiry for issuing licences for bribes. Only an overhaul of safety practices, norms and supervisory mechanisms as well as a commitment of business owners to safety can improve the safety record of these units. There is a lesson from Tamil Nadu. Once infamous for child labour in unsafe workplaces, and frequent deadly accidents, Sivakasi's fireworks units have now turned around their safety record. Enhanced safety training and awareness among workers and owners have achieved this though illegal units still report accidents.

Pakistan's arms sales drive calls for India's attention

Mahesh Sachdev

is a former Indian Ambassador specialising in oil and West Asia

Although largely ignored by India, a couple of historic benchmarks were created in Rawalpindi on February 2. Pakistani Chief of Defence Forces Asim Munir met with Eastern Libyan State President Khalifa Haftar - believed to be the first meeting between two self-styled Field Marshals. They reportedly finalised a deal to supply Pakistani arms worth $4.6 billion - the largest such deal ever by Islamabad - to the Benghazi-based Libyan National Army (LNA) headed by the 82-year-old warlord.

Since the overthrow of leader Muammar Qadhafi in 2011, the LNA has been in a sputtering but inconclusive civil war with the Tripoli-based internationally recognised Government of National Unity (GNU).

An arms push

Haftar regarded his first-ever visit to Pakistan as important enough to send his Prime Minister two days ahead, and bring along Saddam, his son and putative heir. The deal reportedly comprises 16 fully loaded JF-17 fighter jets (built in Pakistan with Chinese assistance, a Russian engine and some Turkish missiles) and 12 Super Mushak trainer aircraft over the next 30 months. As neither the LNA nor the GNU currently has a worthwhile air component, Haftar hopes that the Pakistani game-changing supplies will enable him to win the civil war. Some reports indicate that the deal is being funded by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which has long supported Haftar.

Pakistan has also been chasing a similar opportunity in Sudan, another Arab country afflicted by civil war for the past three years. It is negotiating to sell $1.5 billion worth of defence equipment to the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF), currently waging a bloody war against the Rapid Support Forces (RSF). While the initial deal reportedly involves 10 Karakorum-8 light attack aircraft, more than 200 drones, and advanced air defence systems, it may eventually include JF-17 fighter jets, raising the price tag to $4 billion. There are hints that Saudi Arabia may finance this transfer through the waiver of loans owed to it by Islamabad.

Leveraging recent developments, such as the claimed successes in the May 2025 India-Pakistan conflict, U.S. President Donald Trump's White House welcome for Asim Munir, the signing of the Strategic Mutual Defence Agreement with Saudi Arabia, and the UAE President's visit to Islamabad, Pakistan has turbocharged its defence exports. It claims to have already supplied JF-17s to Azerbaijan, Myanmar and Nigeria, and has offered them to Bangladesh. If Pakistan's claimed and potential deals are cumulated, they reach $13 billion.

But then, several constraining factors could intervene to dampen the optimism. First, Pakistan's capacity to produce the JF-17 is limited to about 25 units a year to be shared between domestic requirements and exports. Lacking an industrial base of its own, it largely assembles these fighters from foreign-sourced components, creating dependencies. Second, these transactions are often made to recipients dependent on third-party financing, a pinch point. Third, the deals often pose tricky legal and geopolitical issues – both Libya and Sudan are currently under United Nations arms embargoes, and the two megadeals are buffeted by the Saudi-UAE rivalry, making them an awkward balancing act for Rawalpindi. The possibility of Haftar supplying Pakistani arms to RSF (supported by the UAE) cannot be ruled out, which would put its weapons with both the Sudanese belligerents. Moreover, the hype about the combat-proven success against India may eventually wear out, revealing shoddy, incompetent products, and result in a reversal. Finally, Munir's bromance with Mr. Trump may be a mixed blessing: While Mr. Trump may bless the transactional activities of his favourite Field Marshal, he may disfavour Munir acting as a conduit for the Chinese military hardware to a region that Washington regards as its fiefdom.

In the past, Washington has often found it convenient to subcontract the Gulf security to Pakistan. The current episode seemed different, with the Gulf monarchies using the same subcontractor to fortify their respective regional proxies. In this game, the GHQ Rawalpindi is all trumps: it gets hard cash, earns brownie points from the cash-rich Gulf monarchies and expands its outreach to regional hotspots for future security aggregation. Unlike in the past, Pakistanis are only supplying hardware and training, without putting boots on the ground.

Rawalpindi's recent arms deal surge tilts the geopolitics in Pakistan's favour

A growing role

Pakistan's growing role as a net security provider to the Gulf and beyond should concern New Delhi. India has a much stronger economic engagement with the Gulf than Pakistan, which has, hitherto, been seeking handouts. However, Pakistan's success in forging a regional security and defence role would be a force multiplier, enabling it to reclaim parity with India in that region. It may make the country a hub of the military-industrial complex, creating a strategic challenge for India.

The Gulf's growing security dependence on Pakistan also helps Islamabad to wash away the taint of terrorism, dodgy financial practices and drug running, earning it plaudits from Beijing and Washington. All these developments may embolden GHQ Rawalpindi to revive terrorism in India, notwithstanding New Delhi's threat of retaliation, which, if it happens, may afford Pakistan a chance to conflate a fresh false narrative about a military success.

The recent Pakistani defence salesmanship scoops should prompt us to ask how this neighbour can upstage us in our backyard? While the Pakistani economy and manufacturing are a tenth and a thirteenth of India's, respectively, thanks to extensive joint ventures with China and Türkiye, its annual defence production has reached $7 billion, compared to India's $18 billion. Its sales pitch has been sophisticated and multi-pronged - leveraging Islamic solidarity, military-to-military links, and aggressive pricing.

Unlike India, Pakistan's defence exports and military establishment do not work in silos. Last December, Munir personally visited Benghazi to consummate the deal with Saddam Haftar. Similarly, the PAF chief led the negotiations with Saudi Arabia and SAF. Earlier, Islamabad supplied around $400 million of ammunition to Ukraine. While some may regard these deals as morally and legally questionable, GHQ Rawalpindi has single-mindedly pursued them regardless. Pakistan's gains may not be India's loss in material terms, but these, nevertheless, tilt the geopolitics in its favour.

Steps for India

While India's defence exports have grown rapidly to stand at $2.8 billion in 2024-25, Pakistan has shown that an asymptotic surge is achievable with greater endeavour and passion. As a more responsible and self-respecting country adhering to international law, India cannot replicate Pakistani tactics. Yet, India can leverage its indigenous defence industry more effectively for exports. India should prioritise defence exports for their financial and political spin-offs, focusing particularly on its friends in the neighbourhood and the Global South. As the world's third-largest crude importer, India can leverage its buying power to persuade its oil suppliers to redress the huge trade imbalance by procuring Indian weapon systems.

Similarly, India has sizable aid programmes and credit lines with several countries, which could be utilised to lubricate such arms deals. It could create a dedicated, nimble defence export promotion organisation embedded with the stakeholders concerned, such as the public and private defence producers, relevant experts, including those from IT and Artificial Intelligence, pertinent Ministries and funding institutions.

Such an organisation should aggressively market its defence products at various international exhibitions and bilateral events and should be empowered to negotiate and conclude deals autonomously with minimum bureaucratic controls. Only then would India have a fighting chance to tilt the current highly skewed balance of defence trade. India is currently the world's second-largest arms importer and ranks low among the top 25 defence exporters. The difference between the two ranks needs to be bridged.

India's need for a mandatory R&D disclosure standard

Varun Aggarwal

is Co-founder, FAST-India and Change Engine

Aditya Sinha

writes on macroeconomic and geopolitical issues

George Akerlof's classic 1970 paper, The Market for Lemons, showed that when buyers cannot tell high-quality products from low-quality ones, they discount everything and good products exit the market. The same logic applies to corporate research and development (R&D) today. Corporate R&D intensity in India stagnates at 0.23% of GDP, far below global peers, due not only to firms' risk aversion but also to the lack of information in capital markets to price innovation. When innovation is invisible, it is systematically undervalued. When undervalued, it is underproduced. Worse, in the absence of structured disclosure, there is no mechanism to systematically weed out low-quality, copycat or purely rent-seeking "innovation" projects.

Fuelling growth

An analysis by Brown and Martinsson (2018, Management Science) shows that when transparency and quality of disclosures improve, R&D intensity rises sharply, by 6%-12% of average R&D intensity in OECD economies and 3%-14% in large cross-country firm samples. This is especially true in equity-dependent, innovation-driven sectors. Crucially, capital expenditures on tangible assets do not rise in the same way, confirming that transparency pushes investment specifically towards risky, uncertain innovation rather than brick-and-mortar assets.

Recent evidence from China makes this point very clear. Mandated disclosures on the Shanghai Stock Exchange spurred higher innovation, especially in non-state, high-tech, and financially constrained firms (Liu, Ye & Liu, 2023, China Journal of Accounting Research). There is also a caveat, especially in cases such as pharma; once firms are required to reveal detailed pipeline information, disclosure becomes a Bayesian signal that prompts industry-wide learning. Companies update their beliefs after observing competitors' project quality, overlap, and timelines; weaker or cash-constrained firms recognise when their projects are dominated and rationally terminate or scale them back. The result is portfolio purification – low-quality, duplicative, or high-risk projects are pruned early, capital shifts toward stronger scientific bets, and safety improves, though fewer long-shot projects survive because the learning effect outweighs pure competitive pressure. Crucially, this does not weaken the case for R&D disclosures. Transparency reallocates innovation effort toward higher-quality opportunities, enhances investment efficiency, and improves social outcomes.

Structured research and development (R&D) reporting will improve transparency, funding and innovation outcomes

The framework

India's R&D ecosystem today operates under the opposite condition. To correct this structural information failure, we propose the Mandatory R&D and Technology Disclosure Standard, under the Securities and Exchange Board of India's Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements Regulations, (LODR) 2015. This will not be a mandate on how much firms must invest in R&D, nor will it direct the technological pathways they should pursue. Instead, it will require listed entities to disclose a structured set of innovation metrics across five critical dimensions: first, R&D expenditure (capital and revenue) with segment-level granularity, enabling investors to separate genuine research spending from general operating costs; second, patent activity, including filings, grants, expirations, and maintenance, allowing assessment of IP pipelines; third, technology workforce composition, which signals capability depth; fourth, Technology Readiness Level (TRL) status of major innovation projects, providing a standardised view of pipeline maturity; and fifth, innovation turnover, measured as the percentage of revenue derived from products introduced in the past five years. These disclosures are routine in some geographies but absent in India, leaving analysts and investors to operate in a data-poor environment. Also note, we are not pushing for disclosures of proprietary information.

Before full implementation, the Board should require these disclosures.

The Board should mandate these disclosures before full implementation. This can be made public on a voluntary basis for the first two years, to familiarise firms and build data quality. After this transition period, disclosure should be made mandatory.

The rationale for adopting the R&D standard rests on five arguments. First, structured disclosure reduces information asymmetry. In simple terms, when investors cannot tell which companies are genuinely innovating and which ones are not, they treat everyone as average. This mispricing discourages firms from investing in technology because they know the market cannot tell the difference.

Second, better disclosure lowers the cost of capital. When companies are more transparent, big investors feel more confident, share prices become more stable, and firms can raise money more cheaply. This matters even more for companies whose value lies in intangibles such as R&D, design, or patents.

A boost for market discipline

Third, transparency strengthens market discipline. When innovation metrics such as R&D spend, patent counts, or project maturity are visible to investors, firms with weak performance feel pressure from shareholders, boards and competitors to improve. Korea saw this effect clearly after introducing mandatory intangible disclosures under the Korean International Financial Reporting Standards (K-IFRS), companies increased R&D once they knew everyone could see the numbers.

Fourth, disclosure improves innovation productivity and efficiency. According to the OECD's 2021 Intangibles Report, countries that make innovation reporting compulsory get more patents and better commercial outcomes for every rupee, or dollar, spent on R&D, because transparency leads to more efficient allocation of research funds.

Fifth, mandatory disclosure is a non-distortionary policy instrument. It does not force companies to spend more, it does not cost the government money, it does not favour any sector, and it allows firms complete freedom in how they innovate. All it does is to ensure that the market has accurate information, after which investors, not the state, decide how to reward or penalise firms. '

Markets cannot make lemonade from invisible lemons. India should shine a light on R&D. It would definitely ensure that the orchard grows, the juice flows, and innovation flourishes.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The real picture

The United States and Israel audaciously claim that their aggression against Iran is intended to neutralise an 'existential threat' to Israel, prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and 'liberate the Iranian people'. Equally disturbing is the apparent support of Europe and West Asia for this war. History will judge harshly Russia's war in Ukraine driven by territorial ambitions, Israel's occupation of Gaza and its oppression, and now this reckless attack, justified with questionable excuses. It is disheartening that we seem to have lost our moral compass, remaining silent while prioritising economic and political interests over justice.

A.S. Srinivasan,
Chennai

The UN has failed

Although UN chief António Guterres has termed the airstrikes as a violation of international law, the perpetrators do not care at all. If no one listens to the UN, then what is the purpose of the body?

Brij B. Goyal,
Ludhiana, Punjab

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Aligning religious tourism with ecology

Sanjana Nair
Policy analyst at the Centre for Policy Design, Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE)

M. Soubadra Devy
Senior fellow at Suri Sehgal Centre for Biodiversity Conservation, ATREE

India's religious geography is inseparable from its ecological one. Across the country, sacred groves, shrines, caves and pilgrimage routes are located within or adjacent to protected areas, often in ecologically sensitive habitats. For centuries, belief systems helped regulate access and behaviour, enabling coexistence with nature. Today, however, rising visitor numbers and the growing commercialisation of pilgrimage routes are placing unprecedented pressure on forest ecosystems. What were once seasonal, community-embedded rituals have become forms of mass tourism, bringing in infrastructure that fragile ecosystems cannot absorb. The challenge before policymakers now is how this intersection between faith and conservation can be governed without undermining ecological integrity or the rights of forest-dwelling communities.

Major flashpoint

Recent reporting in *The Hindu* on deliberations of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife (SCNBWL) regarding religious structures inside sanctuaries has brought this long-standing tension into sharp focus. The immediate case involved a proposal to expand a religious establishment in a sanctuary in Gujarat. Though initially approved, citing the existence of the "establishment of the temples, prior to the settlement of forest rights in the region", it was later withdrawn over concerns that it would be the first instance of protected areas being diverted for a religious institution – potentially setting a precedent for similar demands across the country. The Environment Minister, who chairs the SCNBWL, noted that many sacred caves and religious sites within forests are mentioned in religious texts, and suggested the formulation of a Standard Operating Procedure for proposals involving religious institutions.

This restraint is well founded. Under India's legal framework, any construction or expansion on forest land after 1980 is generally treated as encroachment under the Forest (Conservation) Act. The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and National Tiger Conservation Authority norms permit only limited, carefully justified interventions, primarily to manage existing pressures or mitigate ecological conflict. Unregulated construction fragments habitats, increases human-wildlife conflict, and weakens protected areas.

The question of rights

Yet conservation cannot be pursued in a cultural or social vacuum. India is home to thousands of sacred natural sites, many of which are living landscapes stewarded by local communities. Sacred groves function as biodiversity refuges precisely because belief systems have restricted extraction and disturbance. The Forest Rights Act, 2006 adds a critical legal dimension. It mandates the recognition of the rights of Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers. Any diversion, restriction or regulation affecting traditional access or practices must be preceded by rights recognition. Ignoring this requirement risks marginalising communities that have long protected these forests.

A blanket ban on religious activity inside forests would therefore be neither constitutionally defensible nor culturally sensitive. At the same time, allowing new constructions or expansion under the guise of faith would set a dangerous precedent. The challenge lies in navigating this middle ground with clarity and care.

In 2023, the Ashoka Trust for Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) in collaboration with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) published a set of guidelines on religious tourism within tiger reserves that offer a evidence-based pathway and a green pilgrimage model. Drawing on over 15 years of on-ground work in Kalakad-Mundanthurai, Ranthambhore and Corbett, these guidelines demonstrate that religious activities in protected areas are not incompatible with conservation, provided it is managed sustainably.

A green pilgrimage model

A clear no-expansion principle is recommended – there should be no new constructions or enlargement of existing structures within core forest areas. At the same time, the guidelines allow for the recognition of long-standing sites that pre-date the notification of protected areas, subject to strict, impact-based regulation. It also includes caps on pilgrim numbers, restrictions on transport such as bans on night traffic, and robust controls on waste, water use, and sanitation. Equally important is governance. Multi-stakeholder mechanisms involving forest departments, temple authorities, local governments and communities, and conservation organisations should be encouraged.

In pilot areas, where guidelines have been implemented, measures such as restricting private vehicles, managing waste through temple trusts, and engaging religious leaders have led to measurable reductions in roadkill, plastic pollution and water contamination, without denying access to worshippers or displacing forest-dependent communities. Such guidelines if taken up by the National Board for Wildlife would be beneficial.

India's strength lies in its ability to integrate ecological protection with cultural continuity. A principled approach would involve zero tolerance for new encroachments, rigorous case-by-case evaluation of existing sites, mandatory settlement of forest rights, and adoption of proven green pilgrimage management models backed by continuous monitoring.

A clear no-expansion principle is recommended – there should be no new constructions or enlargement of existing structures within core forest areas

Projecting a Muslim-centric Opposition

The BJP in Assam wants to position itself as the sole custodian of Hindu interests

STATE OF PLAY

Rahul Karmakar
rahul.karmakar@thehindu.co.in

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma's public statements are often brazen but layered. He recently projected the Raijor Dal as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)'s principal rival in the 2031 Assembly elections, and suggested that the party, led by Akhil Gogoi, born out of the protests against the anti-Citizenship (Amendment) Act (CAA), will become a refuge for Muslim leaders. It is a calibrated narrative in the landscape of Assam's Opposition politics.

By naming the Raijor Dal as the BJP's likely challenger five years hence, Mr. Sarma is shaping the perception of who matters. Being described as the 'main rival' by the Chief Minister elevates a young regional party above other Opposition players.

It also sidelines the Congress and signals that the BJP does not see the grand old party as a long-term ideological threat in Assam.

Mr. Sarma's statement on the Raijor Dal becoming a shelter for Muslim leaders coincides with two Congress MLAs – Abdur Rashid Mandal and Sherman Ali Ahmed – joining the Raijor Dal. Both are Bengali-origin Muslims, from a community pejoratively referred to as the Miyas.

Communal reshaping

This statement by the Chief Minister reinforces a narrative that Opposition parties in Assam are converging around Muslim consolidation. This is particularly significant due to the perception that the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF) is losing its hold among Bengali Muslims in western, central, and southern Assam. Recent elections suggest that its appeal is waning. Born in 2005, the AIUDF positioned itself as the principal political voice of Bengali Muslims by penetrating Congress strongholds.

In the context of the upcoming 2026 Assembly polls, two parallel narratives had gained traction. One, that Congress is increasingly dependent on Muslim votes to remain relevant in Assam. Two, that newer regional formations could absorb leaders and voters disillusioned with the AIUDF. By stating that Muslim leaders will switch over to the Raijor Dal, Mr. Sarma collapses these trends into a single storyline – that the anti-BJP space is being reshaped into a Muslim-heavy bloc, regardless of the party label. This serves the BJP's broader strategy of polarisation without overt provocation. If the Congress is painted as a 'Muslim party' and the Raijor Dal as the next platform for Muslim consolidation, the BJP can position itself as the custodian of Assamese Hindu interests.

The framing is not accidental. Mr. Gogoi built his political brand on Assamese nationalism, anti-corruption activism, and opposition to the CAA. His appeal cuts across communities. But by associating the Raijor Dal with Muslim leadership, Mr. Sarma attempts to reframe that party's identity in the public imagination.

There is also a tactical benefit in elevating Akhil Gogoi over the Congress, specifically its State president Gaurav Gogoi, Mr. Sarma's bête noire. The former is a fiery politician with a strong street presence but limited organisational depth. By positioning the Raijor Dal as the main rival for 2031, the BJP effectively encourages a fragmentation of the Opposition vote in the near term.

The Congress, struggling to keep its allies in good humour, is weakened when the narrative shifts from a BJP vs Congress contest to a more crowded Opposition field.

Moreover, projecting the Raijor Dal as the future rival allows the BJP to argue that its dominance is so entrenched that only a new force can challenge it, and that too only five years from now.

Opposition anxieties

For the 'Miyas', the subtext is equally significant. If the AIUDF is losing ground and the Congress is perceived as unreliable, voters may look for alternatives that promise assertive representation without being pigeonholed as communal. While the Raijor Dal could attract such support, Mr Sarma's pre-emptive branding complicates that possibility. By casting any shift of Muslim leaders toward the Raijor Dal as evidence of communal consolidation, he raises the political cost of that migration in a polarised environment.

Whether this projection becomes self-fulfilling will depend on how Akhil Gogoi navigates the delicate balance between regional nationalism and inclusive politics.

For now, Mr Sarma's narrative accomplishes its goal: it divides potential coalitions, and ensures that the BJP remains the central axis around which Assam's political debate revolves.

The U.S.-Israel attacks on Iran threaten global fuel trade

Iran's retaliation to the 'pre-emptive strike' and the closing of the Strait of Hormuz have led to a surge in oil prices

DATA POINT

Sambavi Parthasarathy
Nitika Francis

With Iran targeting U.S. bases in other countries in the West Asian region, the U.S.-Israel attack has created a massive ripple effect extending well beyond the region, threatening global energy security.

Following a drone attack from Iran on Monday, Qatar halted the production of liquefied natural gas at the world's largest export facility. The suspension of operations across refineries in other Gulf nations such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq have also been announced. Oil and gas prices have surged following the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, a gateway to 20% of the world's oil exports from the Gulf.

Oil prices soared to $78.31 on Monday, almost 12% higher than a week ago (**Chart 1**). Prices were slowly inching up last week even as negotiations between the U.S. and Iran were ongoing, largely due to the military build-up by the U.S. in the region.

According to the Iranian Red Crescent, the U.S.-Israeli attacks, dubbed Operation Epic Fury by the U.S.'s Pentagon, have killed more than 780 people in Iran as of March 3, hitting more than 500 locations since February 28. In retaliation, Iran fired missiles at Israel and nations across the region, particularly targeting U.S. bases in Qatar, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Jordan, pushing what was claimed to be a "pre-emptive strike" by the U.S. and Israel into an all-out regional war. This region accounts for 31% of the global oil production in 2024, and includes five of the top 10 oil-producing countries – Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Iraq, Iran, and Kuwait (**Chart 2**). West Asia accounted for 38% of global oil exports in 2024.

Moreover, Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps have announced the closure of the Strait of Hormuz which is a narrow channel connecting major oil-producing nations with the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. Ships transporting oil have been effectively halted through threats, mine-laying, and direct attacks by Iran's military, creating a chokepoint.

Several nations, including Saudi Arabia and Iraq, transport about 14 million barrels of crude oil and petroleum products through the Strait per day (**Chart 3**). According to energy consulting firm Kpler, the Strait represents 31% of all seaborne crude flows .

Impact on China, India

The closure could stall supply to countries like China and India that import millions of barrels daily via the Strait. China received 5.4 million barrels of crude oil per day via the Strait in FY25Q1, the highest in volume. India followed at 2.1 million barrels per day (**Chart 4**).

Iran, which exported more than 97% of its oil to China in 2024, was a major source of cheap crude for Beijing, a dependence precipitated by longstanding U.S.-led sanctions (**Chart 5**). Notably, the Strait's closure comes months after the disruption of China's supplies from Venezuela, another key source of discounted crude, following the U.S.'s invasion and naval blockade of the Latin American nation. With two of its major sources of cheap oil now effectively cut off, China faces mounting pressure on its energy security.

About 56% of China's oil imports came from West Asian countries in 2024. However, China has sought to mitigate this dependence by storing Iranian oil in tankers and onshore inventories. Kpler estimates China has about 1.2 billion barrels in onshore commercial and strategic inventories as of Monday, with levels surging 30% since 2020. In India's case, the Ministry of Petroleum has said that the country has sufficient crude oil stocks to last up to 25 days. The Strait's closure can have detrimental effects if it persists.

Fuelling conflict

The data for the charts were sourced from the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and the U.S. Energy Information Administration

Chart 1: Daily Brent crude oil prices in the last year. Figures in $ per barrel. Oil prices soared to $78.31 on Monday, almost 12% higher than a week ago

Chart 2: Top 10 producers of crude oil worldwide (1,000 barrels per day)

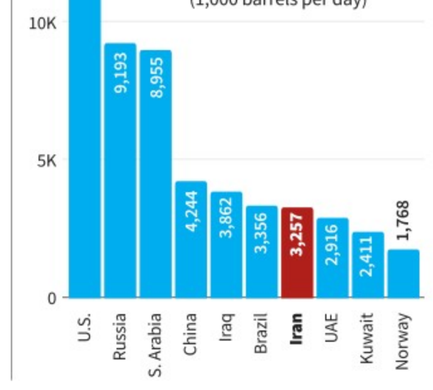


Chart 3: Volume of crude oil and petroleum transported through the Strait of Hormuz by select countries of origin

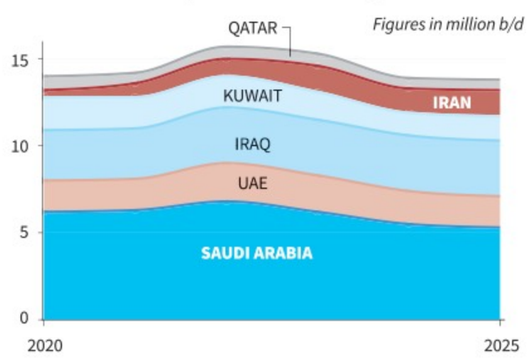


Chart 4: Volume of crude oil transported through the Strait of Hormuz by destination

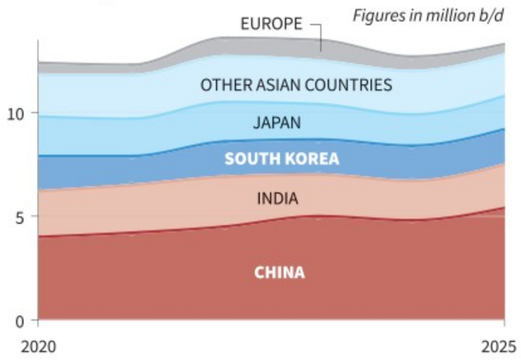
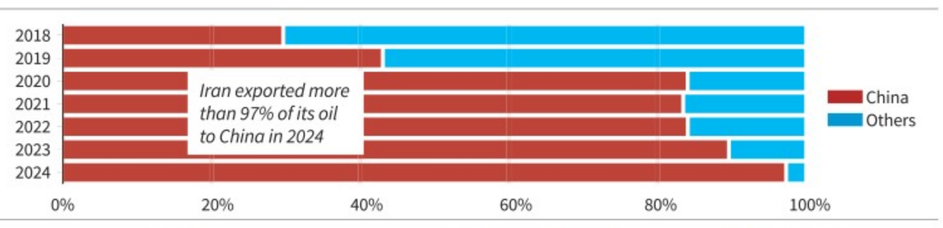


Chart 5: The share of crude oil and condensates exported from Iran to China and other countries



FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 4, 1976

Ford studying steps against bribery by firms

Washington, March 3: President Gerald Ford is studying a list of measures to be taken against major corporations which are paying bribes abroad, White House spokesman Mr. Ron Nessen has disclosed.

The spokesman did not say what measures were being considered. Among the options would be withdrawal of Government orders from those firms found to be involved in irregularities.

The U.S. Government was said to be pressing internationally for certain rules of behaviour for all major corporations to prevent further corruption.

A large number of American corporations have admitted paying bribes to expand their foreign sales and the known number of cases rises nearly everyday as new ones are revealed.

Japanese firm's chairman resigns

In Tokyo, Mr. Hiro Hiyama resigned to-day as chairman of the giant Marubeni corporation, agents in Japan for the American Lockheed Aircraft Corporation in the wake of the Lockheed pay-off scandal.

A spokesman for Marubeni, Japan's third largest trading house, said Mr. Hiyama would remain with the company as a director in an advisory capacity.

The Lockheed scandal has also cast a shadow over the current visit of U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman in Tokyo.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 4, 1926

Mr. Churchill "ragged" at Belfast

London, March 3: Mr. Churchill made an interesting addition to his wardrobe of hats during his visit to Belfast, to receive the Honorary Doctorate of Law of Queen's University. He was presented with a paddy hat and a clay pipe stuck with band and was subsequently the victim of a boisterous "rag" in which he was compelled to wear the hat, carry shillelagh and ride in the streets on a jaunting car. Later in a speech he said he cherished the hope that some day all Ireland would be loyal, united within itself and united with the British Empire.

From Page One

Battered Iran attacks oil infra targets in West Asia

The embassy in Riyadh on Tuesday warned of an imminent attack in the eastern city of Dhahran, home to much of the Saudi Arabia oil and gas installations.

U.S.-Israeli strikes have hit more than 500 locations in Iran since the start of the conflict, killing at least 787 people, according to the Iranian Red Crescent Society.

U.S. and Israeli strikes also targeted the building housing the committee that is to elect Iran's new Supreme Leader, Iranian media reported. The strikes also caused damage at an airport in Bushehr, a port city that also hosts a nuclear power plant, the Mehr news agency reported.

"The military has launched a ninth wave of strikes in Tehran. The Air Force has now begun a large-scale wave of strikes targeting the Iranian terror regime's infrastructure in Tehran," the Israeli military said.

"Their air defence, air force, navy, and leadership is gone. They want to talk. I said: 'Too late!'," Mr. Trump said.

"Just about everything's been knocked out," Mr. Trump said as he met German Chancellor Friedrich Merz, answering his first questions from reporters since the strikes began on Saturday.

Forced to flee

The conflict escalated further on its fourth day, with Israel ordering the military to take control of more positions inside Lebanon to create a buffer zone, as the Lebanese Army pulled back some of its forces after Hezbollah attacked Israeli bases.

Israel sent troops into Lebanon on Tuesday and warned residents of over 80 villages to evacuate as the Iran-backed militant Hezbollah group said it was ready for an "open war" with Israel.

The Israeli military said it had struck more than 160 targets of the militant group. The Lebanese government had banned military activities by Hezbollah on Monday after it opened fire on Israel in retaliation for the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader. At least 40 people have been killed in Israeli attacks on Lebanon on Monday and Tuesday, a spokesperson for Lebanon's Health Ministry said.

Lebanese authorities said more than 58,000 people have been forced to flee their homes.

Meanwhile, Tehran's UN ambassador said on Tuesday the United States made a "totally stupid decision" to attack Iran while in negotiations, and betrayed Gulf nations by trashing their diplomatic efforts.

UAE, Oman targeted

Drones struck a fuel tank in Oman on Tuesday while in the UAE, falling debris from an intercepted drone caused a fire at an oil storage and trading zone in Fujairah. Several drones also targeted the port of Duqm on Oman's eastern coast, according to a security source quoted by the official Oman News Agency.

The Oman attack is the second on the port in three days, with the sultanate targeted despite acting as a mediator between Iran and the U.S. just days prior to the war.

The U.S. State Department ordered the evacuation of non-emergency personnel and family in Kuwait, Bahrain, Iraq, Qatar, Jordan and UAE. The U.S. military has confirmed six deaths of American service members.

France has deployed Rafale jets over UAE to protect its naval and air bases against Iranian attacks, Foreign Minister Jean-Noel Barrot said.

Across Iran's capital, explosions rang out throughout the night into Tuesday, with aircraft heard overhead. Strikes caused two explosions at a broadcasting facility in Tehran, Iranian state TV said, adding that no one was injured.

(With AP inputs)

Centre inks ₹5,000-cr. deal to strengthen maritime security

Coast Guard to get six ALH Mk-III helicopters from HAL; Russian Shtil missiles to be installed on Navy's frontline warships; acquisitions aim to enhance air defence and generate job opportunities

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

The Defence Ministry on Tuesday signed contracts worth ₹5,083 crore for the acquisition of six Advanced Light Helicopters Mk-III (maritime role) for the Indian Coast Guard and Shtil surface-to-air vertical launch missiles for the Indian Navy.

The contract for the six choppers, along with operational role equipment, an engineering support package, and performance-based logistics support, valued at ₹2,901 crore, has been signed with Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd.

Winged watch: The ALH Mk-III choppers will enhance protection of artificial islands and offshore installations. L. BALACHANDAR

Indigenous push

The purchase comes under the category of indigenously designed, developed, and manufactured products, the Ministry said.

The twin-engine helicopters incorporate state-of-the-art features superior to the airborne platforms currently in operation, and are capable of undertaking a wide spectrum of maritime security missions from shore-based airfields as well as from ships at sea.

Their induction is expected to significantly enhance the Indian Coast Guard's capability to ensure the safety and protection of artificial islands, offshore installations, and fishermen, as well as safeguarding the marine environment, the Ministry said. The project envisages supply of equipment from more than 200 MSMEs and is expected to generate approximately 65 lakh man-hours of employment.

The contract reinforces the government's commitment to Aatmanirbhar Bharat, or resilient India, and the Make-in-India initiative, while strengthening the country's maritime security architecture, it added.

Separately, the contract for the procurement of Shtil missiles and associated missile holding frames, valued at ₹2,182 crore, has been signed with JSC Rosoboronexport, a state-run company of the Russian Federation.

The acquisition is aimed at substantially enhancing the air defence capabilities of warships on the front line against a wide spectrum of aerial threats, the Ministry said.

Rapid reaction

The system will bolster the layered air defence architecture aboard Indian Navy platforms by providing rapid-reaction, all-weather engagement capability and improved survivability in contested maritime environments. The contract underscores the long-standing defence partnership between India and Russia.

The contracts were inked in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh at South Block in New Delhi.

Gaurav Gogoi, 41 others in Congress list for Assam polls

Rahul Karmakar
GUWAHATI

Gaurav Gogoi

Gaurav Gogoi, State party president and Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, figures in the first list of 42 candidates released by the Congress for the Assam Assembly polls on Tuesday.

The list has a mix of experienced leaders and new faces. The party has retained five sitting MLAs, including Leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Debabrata Saikia (Nazira constituency), and fielded former State president Ripun Borah from Barchalla. Mr. Borah returned to the Congress after spending a few years in the Trinamool Congress.

The party is fielding Mr. Gogoi from the Jorhat Assembly constituency, where a keen contest between the Congress and the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is anticipated. The bête noire of Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma, Mr. Gogoi won the Jorhat Lok Sabha seat in 2024.

"I am grateful to the people of Jorhat Lok Sabha (seat), without whom I would not have reached this position. To my fellow Congress brothers, sisters, colleagues and elders, the time is now to take Assam in a new and bold direction," he posted on X.

Among those re-nominated is Nandita Das (Boko-Chaygaon), one of five women candidates.

The notable names include former Minister Ajit Singh from Udharbond, former MLA Kartik Sen Sinha from Patharkandi, former Union Minister Paban Singh Ghatowar's son Pranjal Ghatowar from Chabua-Lahowal and Dhubri MP Rakibul Hussain's son Tanzil Hussain from Samaguri.

BJP president Nitin Nabin set for Rajya Sabha entry; party rewards performers with ticket

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) on Tuesday nominated its national president, Nitin Nabin, as the party's candidate for the coming Rajya Sabha polls from Bihar.

Mr. Nabin's nomination and subsequent election will entail his resignation from the Bihar Assembly, where he is a member, and a full-time shift to Delhi, an imperative for the national president.

Former MLA Shivesh Kumar is the party's second nominee from the State. He is a leader from the Ravidas community and the son of Munni Lal, a former IAS officer and Minister in the Vajpayee government.

Five Rajya Sabha seats from Bihar are going to the polls, with NDA allies BJP and Janata Dal(U) contesting two seats each. The alliance can win the fifth seat if it manages three Opposition votes. BJP ally and Rashtriya Lok Morcha chief Upendra Kushwaha has announced himself as the fifth nominee; he is likely to get support from the NDA allies.

Nominations from the poll-bound States of Assam and West Bengal signal that new candidates will be fielded for the Assembly elections with State leaders being moved to Delhi.

A Minister in the Himanta Biswa Sarma government, Jogen Mohan, and sitting MLA Terash Gowala, who are close to Union Shipping Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, have been nominated for the Upper House. Mr. Mohan is the MLA from Mahmara in Upper Assam, while Mr. Gowala, who comes from the community of tea garden workers, is the MLA from Duliajan, an important oil township.

Nitin Nabin

In West Bengal, former State BJP president Rahul Sinha, an old party loyalist, has been nominated. Mr. Sinha contested the Assembly polls in West Bengal on several occasions, including in 2021, but electoral success eluded him.

In full swing

In Odisha, the BJP has named the party's State president Manmohan Samal and current Rajya Sabha member Sujeet Kumar as its two candidates. With 78 BJP seats in the Assembly and support of three Independent MLAs, the two candidates will comfortably win.

Mr. Samal, who was credited with leading the party to victory in the 2024 Assembly election, was expected to be rehabilitated following his loss from Chandbali in the State polls. Mr. Kumar was initially elected to the Upper House as a Biju Janata Dal candidate. Following his resignation, the BJP retained him as its MP for the remaining term. Now, he will contest for a full Rajya Sabha term.

Dilip Ray, former Union Coal Minister, has announced that he will contest as an Independent candidate from Odisha. Mr. Samal said the party has in principle decided to support his candidature.

From Haryana, the BJP has named Sanjay Bhatia, a former Lok Sabha member who was actively involved in the BJP's Assembly election management in the State. Considered a close confidant of former Chief Minister and current Union Minister Manohar Lal Khattar, Mr. Bhatia was elected to the Lok Sabha from Karnal in 2019.

The practice of rewarding organisational personnel with Rajya Sabha seats is seen in the nomination from Chhattisgarh as well, with State BJP vice-president Laxmi Verma being given ticket. Ms. Verma, who is from the Kurmi community, has been Raipur district panchayat chief and the party's State women's wing president.

The BJP is yet to announce nominees from Maharashtra, where its *Mahayuthi* alliance is in a position to grab six out of the seven seats in the fray.

The last date of nominations is March 5. The polls will be held on March 16.

Manipur CM flags off nation-wide harmony tour

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh on Tuesday flagged off a national integration tour organised by the Assam Rifles, with Meitei, Kuki, Naga and Pangal (Muslim) participants, the first since the ethnic violence began in the state in May 2023.

According to a statement from the Chief Minister's office, 24 youths – six each from the four communities – are part of the tour. They will travel to Imphal, Thiruvananthapuram, Kanniyakumari, Mumbai and Kolkata from March 3 to 13.

At the event, Mr. Singh commended the Assam Rifles for its role in safely relocating over 47,000 people belonging to both the Meitei and Kuki communities during the crisis.

Boy lynched in Odisha over suspicion of goat theft

The Hindu Bureau
BHUBANESWAR

A 15-year-old was allegedly beaten to death by villagers who accused him of stealing goats in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha on Tuesday. Another boy is battling for his life following the brutal attack.

The Odisha Police have arrested 12 persons in connection with the case.

The villagers of Indukudi were incensed over regular disappearance of goats. They stopped the victims, both from Bhutkabadi village, who were passing by on a motorcycle and questioned them. The boys were tied up. Subsequently, the villagers convened a meeting. A resolution was taken declaring them guilty of theft.

The villagers then thrashed the two boys with sticks. When the police rescued the victims, they were in a critical condition.

Stalemate persists in CPI(ML)-Left Front tie-up in West Bengal

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Despite several rounds of talks within the Left Front over a seat-sharing arrangement for the upcoming West Bengal Assembly election, there has been no headway, CPI(ML) general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya told *The Hindu*. His remarks come days after CPI(M) general secretary M.A. Baby said that the expanded Left Front in West Bengal was likely to include the CPI(ML).

The CPI(ML) has been a minor player in West Bengal politics and has not been part of the Left Front. The only CPI(ML) leader to have won an Assembly seat in the State was Santosh Rana in 1977.

The Left Front has fared poorly in the last two Assembly elections. In 2021, the Left parties drew a blank, while the Indian Secular Front (ISF), a new entrant to the alliance, won one seat. In 2016, the CPI(M)-led Mahajot won 76 of the 277 seats it contested, though there were friendly contests in over a dozen constituencies. Addressing a press conference last Friday, Mr. Baby said that in an effort to improve its electoral performance, the Left Front was trying to include newer partners, including the CPI(ML).

However, in an interview with *The Hindu*, Mr. Bhattacharya said that discussions had made no progress so far, even as the election date draws close.

The CPI(ML) had asked for 12 seats, while the CPI (M) was willing to concede only four. "Despite multiple rounds of talks, the negotiations have made no headway because of the CPI(M)'s inflexible stance," Mr. Bhattacharya said.

The elections are expected to be held in April.

Dates for Assembly polls in 4 States, 1 U.T. likely next week

Sreeparna Chakrabarty
NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) will visit Kerala on March 6-7 and West Bengal on March 9-10 to review preparedness for the coming Assembly elections.

Sources in the poll body said the schedule for Assembly elections in Kerala, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Puducherry can be announced next week.

The commission, led by Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar, has already visited Tamil Nadu, Assam, and the Union Territory of Puducherry for review meetings.

The term of West Bengal's Assembly gets over on May 7, Tamil Nadu's on May 10, Assam's on May 20, Kerala's on May 23, and Puducherry's on June 15.

During the upcoming visit, the full commission will hold meetings with registered political parties in the States as well as with the heads/nodal officers of enforcement agencies, police officials, and District Electoral Officers among others on election planning, EVM management, logistics, training of election staff, law and order, voter awareness and outreach activities.

The terms of the Assemblies in the poll-bound States and U.T. end between May and June.

Special intensive revision (SIR) of electoral rolls was conducted under Phase 2 in all the poll-bound States barring Assam where a Special Revision was done due to legal complications related to the unpublished National Register of Citizens (NRC). Following the SIR, the number of voters has gone down in Tamil Nadu (11.55%), Kerala (3.22%), West Bengal (8%) and Puducherry (7.57%).

Bengal conundrum

While final voter lists have been published in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, and Assam, in West Bengal the list released on February 28 has more than 60 lakh voters marked as under "adjudication" whose cases are being decided by court-appointed judicial officers. These voters will be added to the final list when their names are cleared.

Last month, the Calcutta High Court informed the Supreme Court that it was not possible for its limited number of judicial officers to promptly adjudicate more than 60 lakh voter claims following which the top court allowed deploying judges from neighbouring Odisha and Jharkhand.

Ravi Shankar Prasad to chair Lok Sabha's new Privileges Committee

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla on Tuesday reconstituted the Committee of Privileges.

The panel, tasked with examining issues related to breaches of parliamentary privilege and recommending appropriate action, will be chaired by BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad.

The other members nominated are Brijmohan Agrawal (BJP), Tariq Anwar (Congress), Manickam Tagore (Congress), T.R. Baalu (DMK), Kalyan Banerjee (Trinamool Congress), Shrirang Barne (Shiv Sena), Ramvir Singh Bidhuri (BJP), Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo (BJP), Jagdambika Pal (BJP), Trivendra Singh Rawat (BJP), Arvind Ganpat Sawant (Shiv Sena-UBT), Jagadish Shettar (BJP), Manish Tewari (Congress), and Dharmendra Yadav (Samajwadi Party).

APPEAL

Magizh Mithran is 3 years old suffering from "B Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia". He has to undergo Chemotherapy and Radiation Therapy at **Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai**. The total expenditure is **Rs.8,00,000/-**. His father is working in a textile shop as a sales person. His family cannot afford this huge expenditure. Donations sent by Ch/D.D. favouring **Meenakshi Mission Hospital & Research Centre, Madurai will be acknowledged**. The donations sent through Ch/D.D/M.O/NEFT Transfer & GOOGLE PAY (Canara Bank, Nungambakkam Branch, A/c No. 60182010063310, IFSC No: CNRB0016018) favouring **WOMEN'S WELFARE SYNDICATE** is exempted under 80G IT. Your e-mail ID is requested.

All correspondence is done through **WWS**, Regd. Public Charitable Trust, **Flat No. GF 1, Corddel Apartments, O.No.13, N.No.29, Pycrofts Garden Lane, Chennai-600006. Ph: 044-42137401/ 31523781/ 7338978027.**

E-mail ID: womenswelfaresyndicate@gmail.com.

Website: www.womenswelfaresyndicate.org.

WWS

India cannot remain 'impervious' if its citizens are hurt in Gulf conflict: govt.

India also warns of impact on supply chains and energy security; in calls with rulers of Qatar and Oman, PM condemns attacks on these states; he speaks to leaders of UAE, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Bahrain, Kuwait; govt. will monitor evolving situation and take relevant decisions, Ministry says

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

Happy landing: Stranded passengers arriving from Dubai to New Delhi after flight services were resumed from several affected countries on Tuesday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

The safety of nearly one crore Indian citizens in the West Asian region is of "utmost priority" to India, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Tuesday, expressing "grave anxiety" about the unfolding conflict between Israel-U.S. and Iran.

Given its "critical stakes" in the region, India cannot remain "impervious" if Indian nationals in the region are "negatively" affected, the MEA said in a statement, also warning of the impact on trade and energy supply chains.

The MEA's comments, conveying a sense of urgency about the situation, came alongside the telephone diplomacy that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar conducted on Tuesday, with Mr. Modi speaking to Qatar's ruler Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani and Kuwait's Crown Prince Sheikh Sabah Al-Khaled Al-Hamad Al-Mubarak Al-Sabah.

"There are almost one crore Indian citizens who live and work in the Gulf region. Their safety and well-being are of utmost priority. We cannot be impervious to any development that negatively affects them. Our trade and energy supply chains also traverse this geography. Any major disruption has serious consequences for the Indian economy," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

The Prime Minister has spoken to the leaders of the United Arab Emirates, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, and Qatar over Monday and Tuesday.

During his phone call with the ruler of Qatar, Mr. Modi "condemned the attacks on Qatar and thanked the Amir for support and care of the Indian community in his country". He also spoke with Sultan Haitham bin Tariq of Oman and condemned the "violation of sovereignty of Oman and the unity of its territories".

On Tuesday, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar also discussed the conflict over a phone call with the European Union's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas. A day earlier, Ms. Kallas had described Iran's retaliatory attacks across targets in the Gulf Arab states as "inexcusable", and cautioned against "further escalation that could threaten the region, Europe and beyond, with unpredictable consequences". Mr. Jaishankar spoke with his Cypriot counterpart, Constantinos Kombos, and exchanged views on the conflict in the Gulf. Calling for "dialogue and diplomacy", he said, "India is firmly opposed to attacks on merchant shipping. Already, some Indian nationals have lost their lives or are missing as a result of such attacks in the last few days."

Official sources told *The Hindu* that at least three Indian sailors died in the attacks on three oil tankers – *MT Skylight*, *MT Vyom*, and *LCT ALYH* – near the Strait of Hormuz during Sunday and Monday. Another 15 to 20 Indian sailors were injured, including one with critical injuries, officials said, adding that they are closely monitoring Iran's attacks on oil tankers.

"Most of the ships that operate in this region have Indian men and by targeting them, Iran has created a problem for us," an official source said.

On energy security

Against the backdrop of rising concern about the impact of the conflict on India's energy security, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri told pressperson that "India has sufficient energy reserves" to deal with the ongoing situation.

Mr. Puri also held a consultation with the Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh on Tuesday, even as Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal chaired a review meeting to assess the prevailing security environment in the Persian Gulf and examine its implications for Indian vessels and personnel. "The government will continue to monitor the evolving situation and take relevant decisions in the national interest," the MEA said.

Across the West Asian region, Indian missions stayed engaged with the Indian community as many are still stuck in the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and other locations due to flight disruptions. The Indian embassy in Tehran announced on Tuesday the embassy has "relocated most Indian students who were in Tehran to safer locations outside Tehran".

INBRIEF

No international law justifies killing of nation's leader: CM

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Tuesday said no international law "justifies the assassination of a nation's leader" and urged the people in the Union Territory to maintain peace. His statement comes as people in J&K took to the streets protesting the killing of Iran Supreme Leader Khamenei for the third consecutive day amid security restrictions. "No international law justifies foreign military aggression, the assassination of a nation's leader and his family members, or the killing of innocent civilians. These acts violate the UN Charter and basic principles of sovereignty. I condemn these strikes and urge calm and restraint in J&K," he said.

CBSE postpones Board exams for Classes 10, 12 in West Asia

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on Tuesday issued a circular postponing Board examinations scheduled for the next few days for Classes 10 and 12 for students in schools affiliated to the Board in Iran, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, citing the conflict that has erupted in West Asia. In the circular, the CBSE cited the "current situation in parts of the Middle East". The CBSE announced that the examinations scheduled for March 5 and 6 have been postponed, and that new dates will be "announced later". It added that the Board will review the situation on Thursday.

Airlines are operating over 12 special flights to several cities in Saudi Arabia, UAE

Press Trust of India
MUMBAI

Safe return: An Air India flight carrying several Indians from Dubai landed in New Delhi on Tuesday. X/@AIRINDIA_NEWS

Indian airlines, including IndiGo, Air India, Air India Express and SpiceJet, are operating over 12 special flights to various cities in Saudi Arabia and the UAE to bring back passengers stranded due to the escalating conflict in West Asia.

The airlines will operate special flights on Wednesday also.

Providing relief for hundreds of passengers, whose travel plans have been disrupted by the crisis, Air India Express resumed its services to Muscat (Oman) on Tuesday, and IndiGo will restart services to Muscat, and Jeddah and Medina in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday.

Air India is operating two special relief flights to Jeddah and Dubai with wide-body planes on Tuesday, and another such flight to Dubai from Mumbai on March 4.

On Tuesday, Air India Express operated three special flights – Dubai-Bangalore, Abu Dhabi-Delhi and Sharjah-Mumbai – apart from the regular services to Muscat.

"Air India Express will continue to operate its scheduled flights to and from Muscat on March 4. Alongside regular services to/from Delhi, Kochi, Kozhikode, Mangaluru, Mumbai, and Tiruchirappalli, we will also be operating additional flights to Delhi, Kochi, and Mumbai," the airline said in a statement.

IndiGo said it was operating four repatriation flights to Jeddah, and another flight is expected to be operated to Muscat.

Meanwhile, more than 250 flights were cancelled at the Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore and Chennai airports on Tuesday, officials said. Indian airlines have cancelled 1,117 international flights in the past three days.

Air India operated a flight from Dubai to Delhi carrying 149 passengers on Tuesday.

As many as 143 cockpit and cabin crew members of Air India and Air India Express who were stranded in Dubai returned to the national capital in another Air India flight AI918D on Tuesday.

Left parties slam govt.'s silence, stage demonstration

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Left parties on Tuesday protested at the Jantar Mantar here against the U.S.-Israel attack on Iran and the killing of Khamenei. They accused the Centre of keeping silent on the issue.

Protesters held up placards and raised slogans against the attack. They urged people to express solidarity with Iranians.

"The silence of the government over [U.S. President Donald] Trump's imperialist hooliganism, the attack on Iran... Why is Narendra Modi quiet," asked CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat. "He held [Israel Prime Minister Benjamin] Netanyahu's bloodied hands and said it is the voice of the people of India... How is this the voice of the people? You went to Israel to help a genocide," she said.

CPI(ML) Liberation general secretary Dipankar Bhattacharya said Indians do not want this war.

"It is our responsibility to ensure India has no role in this war," he said.

Rahul says India's silence on Iran attack diminishes country's global standing

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

> While security concerns are real, attacks that violate sovereignty will only worsen the crisis. The unilateral attacks on Iran, as well as Iran's attacks on other Middle Eastern nations, must be condemned
>
> **RAHUL GANDHI**
> Congress leader

Condemning the unilateral attack on Iran as well as the retaliatory strikes by Iran in its neighbourhood, Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday questioned India's silence on the developments.

In a post on social media platform X, Mr. Gandhi said Prime Minister Narendra Modi must speak up. "Does he support the assassination of a head of state as a way to define the world order? Silence now diminishes India's standing in the world," he said.

The Opposition leader said escalating hostilities between the United States-Israel alliance and Iran were "pushing a fragile region toward wider conflict".

"Crores of people, including nearly a crore Indians, face uncertainty. While security concerns are real, attacks that violate sovereignty will only worsen the crisis. The unilateral attacks on Iran, as well as Iran's attacks on other Middle Eastern nations, must be condemned," Mr. Gandhi said.

Calls for dialogue

He said violence begets violence, and dialogue and restraint remained the only path to peace.

"India must be morally clear. We should have the courage to speak plainly in defence of international law and human lives. Our foreign policy is rooted in sovereignty and the peaceful resolution of disputes and it must remain consistent," he said.

Echoing a similar position, senior Congress leader Anand Sharma said India's silence and refusal to condemn the unprovoked attack on Iran's sovereignty is a "fundamental departure and an abdication of India's time-tested foreign policy to uphold international law, UN charter & national sovereignty".

'Govt. must answer'

"It is ironic that as the current chairman of BRICS [Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa], India has been isolated to a minority of one, with all other BRICS having condemned the attack. This is a national embarrassment on which the government must answer," Mr. Sharma said in a post on X.

Social media handles of J&K news outlets taken down

The Hindu Bureau
SRINAGAR

Social media handles of several news outlets based in Jammu and Kashmir were taken down on Tuesday by Meta, which runs Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp.

The move came in the wake of widespread protests for the past three days over the killing of Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei on February 28.

The affected outlets include prominent Srinagar-based organisations such as *Greater Kashmir*, *Rising Kashmir* and *Kashmir Life*.

In a statement, *Kashmir Life* said its verified Facebook and Instagram pages "became inaccessible in India on Monday afternoon after Meta restricted access at the request of law enforcement authorities".

Quoting Meta's response, the news portal said the handles "were restricted under Section 79(3)(b) of the Information Technology Act, 2000".

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti decried the move.

Understanding geopolitical factors behind India's silence over Khamenei death

NEWS ANALYSIS

Suhasini Haidar
NEW DELHI

The Union government has come under attack from Opposition parties for its silence on the killing of Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei.

Though External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar spoke with his Iranian counterpart, Abbas Araghchi, there was no mention in any of the readouts of a condolence message or the condemnation of the U.S.-Israeli strikes in the heart of Tehran.

"The trend towards killing or abducting leaders of sovereign countries needs to be countered if we are to live in a civilised world, and not in the jungle. If countries do not come together to oppose this trend, they themselves may be 'on the menu' next," said one former Ambassador well-versed in international law who asked not to be named.

What then explains the absence of any comment from India over the assassination of Iran's leader, or the deadly strikes on schools and hospitals? The External Affairs Ministry did not respond to requests for a reasoning on its statements.

When asked, experts said there were several factors behind India's decision not to comment directly on the killings in Iran. "First, the challenge of navigating today's complex geopolitics. Second, a circumscribed relationship overall with Iran in recent decades, despite the Chabahar port. And third, Khamenei's criticism of India on the issues of Kashmir and the treatment of minorities," former Ambassador to Iran Rakesh Sood told *The Hindu*.

In the streets: People staging a protest in J&K on Tuesday over the assassination of Iran's Supreme Leader Khamenei. IMRAN NISSAR

Ties with Israel

India has had a close security relationship with Israel for decades, but this has exponentially improved in the past few years. With Mr. Modi's visit to Jerusalem last week, and his address to the Knesset, where he proclaimed India stands "with Israel, firmly, with full conviction, in this moment, and beyond", New Delhi appears to be abandoning its traditional regional balance in favour of Israel. It is significant that after the initial strikes by Israel and Iran's retaliatory strikes across the region, Mr. Modi spoke to Mr. Netanyahu and other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) leaders, but not to his Iranian counterpart.

India's ties with Iran have weakened concurrently, not as much due to ties with Israel, but over the tightening of U.S. sanctions on Iran. As a result, after zeroing out oil imports from Iran in 2018, India-Iran trade has wound down from about $17 billion in 2018 to about $1.68 billion in 2025, and investments in Iranian oil and gas fields have been frozen.

India-Iran relations had weathered many political storms in earlier decades. However, more recently, New Delhi had taken umbrage to Khamenei's comments about internal developments in India, including criticism of the Centre's Kashmir policy in 2017 and after the Article 370 amendments in 2019, as well as his statement in March 2020 referring to the Delhi riots as proof of a "massacre of Muslims" in India.

Indians in Gulf region

India's silence may also be explained by its desire to not upset ties in the Gulf region, especially the UAE and Saudi Arabia, where Iran has targeted U.S. bases, oil facilities, and infrastructure. In particular, India's ties with the UAE have been strengthened by a defence partnership announced in January. Government officials told *The Hindu* that it was not possible to take any step that could jeopardise the safety of 10 million Indians who live and work in West Asia.

The Modi government has only just begun to restore ties with the Trump administration after the U.S.'s reduction of tariffs, and agreement on trade announced in February. In addition, the U.S. has included India in its Pax Silica critical technology supply chain. Given the Trump administration's mercurial nature, and threats of sanctions on any engagement with Iran, New Delhi may prefer playing safe.

INBRIEF

Nagaland MLA questions order on *Vande Mataram*

A legislator in Nagaland has objected to the compulsory singing of *Vande Mataram*, calling for an urgent review of a recent directive from the Union Home Ministry. Participating in the Motion of Thanks to the Governor for his address to the 60-member Assembly on Tuesday, Tseilhoutuo Rhütso, MLA, raised what he described as "Constitutional and conscientious concerns" arising from the Ministry's January 28 notification. Acknowledging the significance of *Vande Mataram* in India's freedom struggle, he questioned the enforceability of the directive in Nagaland, a predominantly Christian State protected under special constitutional provisions.

Srinagar Central Jail gets first woman Superintendent

Police officer Saba Shawl is to take over as Kashmir's first woman Jail Superintendent at the Central Jail in Srinagar. The facility houses at least 509 inmates. Ms. Shawl has already served in the administration department at the Central Jail in Kot Balwal, Jammu, and the Kupwara Jail. Ms. Shawl, who is a resident of Srinagar's Peerbagh, qualified through the J&K Public Service Commission examination in 2012 for the post of Superintendent of Police (Prisons). She has a Master's degree in social work and was employed as the senior Community Development Consultant at the Government Polytechnic for Women, Bemina.

MGNREGS workers flag glitches in monitoring app

Workers' union reports widespread failures in National Mobile Monitoring System's facial recognition update; Centre says over 22 lakh workers successfully used the feature on Tuesday

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Towards efficiency: Facial recognition was introduced following the government's e-KYC drive for MGNREGA workers, aimed at eliminating ineligible beneficiaries. AFP

Several workers enrolled under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) have complained about glitches following the latest update to the National Mobile Monitoring System (NMMS), the mobile application used to record their attendance.

From March 1, the government has made facial recognition mandatory for marking attendance, but several workers say the new feature is not functioning properly, making it difficult for them to register their presence.

The Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) shared videos on social media showing MGNREGS workers in parts of Rajasthan struggling to mark attendance. Women workers complained that they were unable to download the muster rolls, while in other locations, the facial recognition system allegedly failed to authenticate users. They also said attempts to reach district and State officials had yielded no response.

MKSS leader Nikhil Dey, one of the key authors of MGNREGA, questioned the efficacy of the monitoring system. "In the two years since it became operational, no review has been held to assess how effective this system has been in curbing corruption. Creating technological barriers for workers hardly helps advance the government's stated objective. Instead, the engineers who are supposed to supervise these sites should be held accountable for malpractices," he said.

Senior government officials, however, claimed that on Tuesday, over 22 lakh workers using the new facial recognition feature successfully recorded their attendance on NMMS. Facial recognition was introduced following the government's e-KYC drive for MGNREGA workers, aimed at eliminating ineligible beneficiaries.

Under the process, mates or supervisors take photographs of workers and upload them to the NMMS application, where they are matched against Aadhaar data. Officials said the additional verification layer was necessitated after the discovery that the NMMS platform had been "misused".

"This new update was rolled out only after prior preparation. In October last year, we began a pilot in three districts, which was later expanded to one district per State," a senior official said, adding that exemptions are available in cases of technical difficulty.

There has been no extensive outage, the official asserted, and the government is handholding workers through the transition.

The police say the van carrying 16 passengers was on its way from Prem Nagar in Delhi to Dholpur in Rajasthan when it was hit by the bus heading from Noida to Gorakhpur. ANI

Six killed as sleeper bus collides with van in Hathras

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

Six people were killed and as many injured after a double-decker bus hit a van in Hathras on the Yamuna Expressway on Tuesday, the police said. The incident took place near milestone 141, near Garhi Hariya village in the Sadabad police station limits, in the early morning, around 4.30 a.m.

The van carrying 16 passengers was on its way from Prem Nagar in Delhi to Dholpur in Rajasthan when it was hit from behind by a sleeper bus travelling from Noida to Gorakhpur, Additional Superintendent of Police Ram Anand Kushwaha said.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed grief over the deaths and directed district officials to reach the spot immediately and expedite relief measures.

"The loss of life in the unfortunate accident in Hathras district is extremely sad and heart-wrenching. My condolences are with the bereaved families. Instructions have been given to immediately take the injured to the hospital and provide them proper treatment. I pray to Lord Shri Ram to grant salvation to the departed souls, strength to the bereaved families to bear this immense loss and speedy recovery to the injured. Om peace," read an official statement.

Healthcare workers' use of GenAI might risk leaks of sensitive patient data, study reveals

Ramya Kannan
CHENNAI

With personal healthcare data being so freely used, stored and shared on digital systems and AI chatbots, the ever-present threat is of safety of such data.

A recent recce by a professional agency has revealed that regulated data, including patient records and medical information, is especially at risk, accounting for 89% of all data policy violations occurring in the area of generative AI usage, significantly higher than the cross-industry average of 31%.

Researchers at Netskope Threat Labs, monitoring key cyber threats facing healthcare organisations and their employees in the last 13 months, released their annual healthcare report on Tuesday and threw a spanner in the works.

The report, which collected data between December 1, 2024, and December 31, 2025, with prior authorisation, indicated that deployment and usage of internal AI tools, which require stringent security guardrails, is already accelerating, and flagged the risks thereof.

Risk areas

With healthcare staff adopting and using GenAI at a higher frequency than ever before, the risk of leaking sensitive patient data through prompts and documents shared online is very high. What makes the scenario worse is the use of personal GenAI accounts for verifying information.

Why is this important to curb? Nearly 43% of healthcare workers are still using personal accounts at work, making it impossible for security systems to detect leaks, the report claims, while adding that healthcare institutions are trying to modify behaviour by getting employees to use approved proprietary software.

Deployment of approved applications along with relevant security tools, say experts.

As a result, the proportion of users using GenAI applications managed by the organisation has also increased during the same period, outpacing such development across industries.

In healthcare, the report claimed, almost two in three organisations are detecting API (application programming interface) traffic to OpenAI and AssemblyAI (63% and 62%, respectively), and more than a third (36%) to Anthropic. Over the past year, more than half of healthcare organisations (56%) that deployed such policies blocked users from uploading files to personal Google Drive accounts, illustrating the frequency of potential data exposure in popular personal cloud applications. Google Drive was followed by Google Gmail (39%) and OneDrive (30%). This is important because attackers also continue to take advantage of the inherent trust employees put in cloud applications, and the files they might find in them. In healthcare, researchers identified several platforms that are frequently exploited by attackers for malware distribution.

Ray Canzanese, director, Netskope Threat Labs, said: "While building defences against external threats is essential for healthcare organisations that have historically been prime targets for cybercriminals, addressing internal risk is equally important, especially in such a highly regulated industry and in the context of fast-paced cloud and AI adoption."

He added that deployment of company-approved applications along with relevant security tools that offer full visibility and control over usage and data movements, should be a priority for healthcare organisations.

Mandatory update: UIDAI finishes 1.2 crore biometric captures of schoolchildren

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has said it has completed mandatory biometric updates for 1.2 crore children between the ages of seven and 15 through large-scale update drives conducted in schools. Updating Aadhaar biometrics is mandatory at least once for children between the ages of seven and 15, and the service is free of cost till October.

The UIDAI said in a statement that it had "saturated more than 1,03,000 schools across India and helped millions of school students complete their mandatory biometric update (MBU) in Aadhaar at ease and comfort of their school campuses", and that it had "rolled out the mission mode MBU drive for school children in September 2025, after a successful technological integration with the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) application".

Children can also complete the update at Aadhaar Seva Kendras across the country.

The initiative was undertaken in partnership with State education departments and "ecosystem partners," the UIDAI said, adding that more than 4,000 machines were used to update children's biometrics in schools.

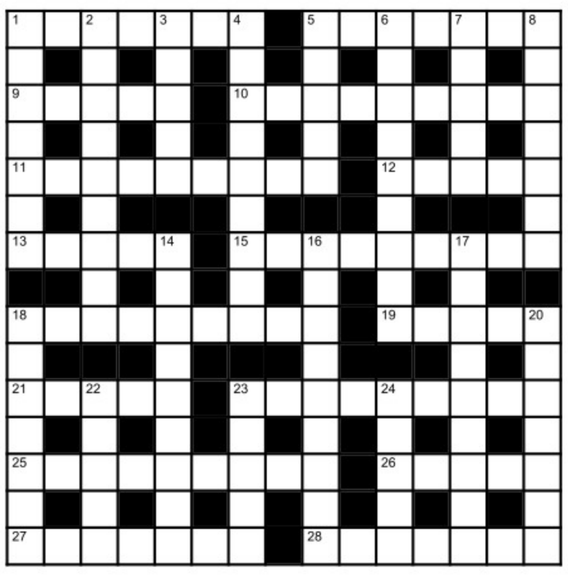
"Keeping biometric updated in children's Aadhaar helps them while carrying out authentication for receiving benefits under various Government schemes, scholarships, wherever applicable, and registering in competitive and university examinations like NEET, JEE and CUET etc.," the Aadhaar issuer said. "UIDAI has been encouraging parents and guardians to update their children's biometrics in Aadhaar." "In addition to camps held at schools, children can also complete their MBU by visiting any of the Aadhaar enrolment centres and Aadhaar Seva Kendras across India."

TH CROSSWORD + 14732

(set by Afterdark)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 He's back to intelligence bureau at Iowa's capital (7)
5 Scot, essentially has obsession to live together (7)
9 Animal police arrests rowdy ultimately at university (5)
10 Type of printer head's black (9)
11 Shows in idiot box left Miles squirming (9)
12 Time to be sorry, right and more honourable (5)
13 Name of boy could be Edward or Winston or both (5)
15 Strange guards and volunteers regularly seen nude at booth (9)
18 Nasser met Harry in a confused situation (5,4)
19 Typeface launches withdrawn (5)
21 Nothing behind toilet sponge (5)
23 Annoyed with internal rate of return and income tax, director worried earlier (9)
25 Hector has a new girl, heaven perhaps (7-2)
26 Satisfaction having zero to be dead leading to award (5)
27 Recant crazy suggestion to circumvent rule, it could be gallows in the ship (7)
28 Medical attendant Rosy is heartless in greenhouse, say (7)

Down

1 Confused niece holding knot of an dressing accessory (7)
2 Say, Theresa's outpouring is expressing hesitation about a plant (9)
3 Deceive Cliff (5)
4 Name a club redesigning a vehicle (9)
5 Blocks suggestion to consume vitamin supplement primarily (5)
6 Spoilt thali with egg given to sister causing bad breath (9)
7 Sexually ambiguous Jack's spouse's essentially small and elegant (5)
8 Educated Suketu tore dossier for contents inside (7)
14 Maybe lost again with homesickness (9)
16 Time to use AI in network for principal system of pipes (5,4)
17 Attack look on skirt, exposing top obscenely (3,6)
18 My meals are sour and sweet (7)
20 Restless female's primal instincts get nutty ultimately (7)
22 Old Malayalee, say, is very happy (2,3)
23 Expression in dialect is overly melodramatic for starters (5)
24 Animal hit by a hunter in the rear (5)

SUDOKU

			5					7
	6			4		8		
		3	8			6	5	
7	9							8
	5	6				7	2	
2							9	5
	8	7			4	5		
		5		9			7	
1					6			

No.SS6809 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★☆

Solution to previous puzzle

	A	C	R	O	S	S	T	H	E	B	O	A	R	D
D		E		B		E		O		O		I		E
E	L	A	T	E		P	O	I	S	O	N	O	U	S
B		S		S		A		S		K		L		E
R	O	E	D	E	E	R		T	E	S	T	I	E	R
I		L				A				H				V
S	P	E	C	S		B	R	A	K	E	S	H	O	E
		S		H		L		U		L		A		
D	I	S	H	O	N	E	S	T		F	O	R	U	M
R				R				O				L		A
E	X	C	I	T	E	R		M	A	S	S	E	U	R
S		H		S		H		A		T		Q		K
S	H	O	R	T	L	I	S	T		E	L	U	D	E
E		P		O		N		O		A		I		R
D	I	S	A	P	P	O	I	N	T	M	E	N	T	

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

9	8	7	5	6	2	4	1	3
2	3	1	8	4	7	5	9	6
5	4	6	3	1	9	2	7	8
7	5	3	9	2	6	8	4	1
1	2	8	4	3	5	7	6	9
6	9	4	1	7	8	3	2	5
4	1	9	2	5	3	6	8	7
3	7	2	6	8	1	9	5	4
8	6	5	7	9	4	1	3	2

FAITH

An allegorical vision

Scriptures describe how during the churning of the Milky Ocean many extraordinary entities emerged – Amritam (nectar), Kalpavruksha (the wish-fulfilling tree), Airavata (the divine elephant), Kaustubha (the celestial gem), Goddess Mahalakshmi, and the deadly halahala poison.

In a profound allegorical sense, the Ramayana itself may be likened to that Milky Ocean.

Valmiki, the Adikavi, churned this vast ocean of dharma using his Manthara mountain-like contemplative intellect, and from this divine churning emerged characters of incomparable spiritual symbolism:

Sugreeva, comparable to the Kalpavruksha, offered his entire Vanara Sena (monkey army) unconditionally to Rama, fulfilling divine purpose. Angada, son of Vaali, shines forth like Airavata, endowed with strength, loyalty, and royal dignity. Lakshmana, radiant and pure, is likened to the cool, soothing moon, ever attending upon righteousness. Sita, embodying compassion, purity, and prosperity, emerges as Mahalakshmi herself, the eternal consort of Narayana. Vibhishana, born in a hostile lineage yet steadfast in dharma, is like Amruta, life-giving and liberating.

Hanuman, the epitome of devotion and service, is the Ratnamala (garland of gems) – each virtue a priceless jewel adorning the epic. And finally, Ravana, despite his immense learning and power, manifests as halahala poison, whose ego and adharma bring destruction. In a discourse, Sri Keshava Vajapeya Swami said the various chapters of the Ramayana are like the waves of a vast ocean. Each wave rises, moves, and subsides, yet all belong to the same boundless expanse.

INBRIEF

Govt. sets up inter-Ministerial panel to monitor trade impact

The Centre created an Inter-Ministerial Group (IMG) to 'facilitate effective coordination, monitoring and follow-up' of events unfolding in Iran and the region and their impact on India's exports and imports, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said. The IMG comprises members from Department of Financial Services, External Affairs, Shipping, Petroleum & Natural Gas Ministries and Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs for monitoring and follow-up, he said.

'Oil price shock from Iran-U.S. strike may raise India CAD'

The rise in oil prices is expected to increase current account deficit (CAD) of major crude importing Asian economies, which include India, according to expert commentaries. Nomura said a 10% rise in oil prices can increase CAD by 0.4 percentage points. The research team said this is because imported crude's share in India's gross domestic product (GDP) is about 3.7%. As of third quarter of fiscal 2026, India's CAD stood at $93.6 billion or 1.3% of the GDP.

Indian Overseas Bank gets ₹766 crore I-T demand notice

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has received a demand notice for more than ₹766 crore from the Income Tax Department. The notice from Deputy Commissioner of Income-Tax, Non-Corporate Circle-8, Chennai, pertains to AY2015-16. In a filing, IOB said it is in the process of challenging the orde. On 'aberrations' pointed out by the authority, it cited "re-computation of income and disallowances made with regard to claims made in the Income Tax returns."

Cable cuts lead to disruptions in Bharti Europe net traffic

While traffic has been re-routed, large cloud/other online providers have chosen to use other providers' systems; the issue precedes Iran conflict

Aroon Deep
NEW DELHI

Vital links: Subsea cables account for an overwhelming majority of intercontinental Internet traffic. REUTERS FILE

Bharti Airtel Ltd.'s network has been facing disruptions in Europe-bound traffic for multiple weeks, leading to cloud providers such as Digital Ocean and Oracle Cloud to shift bulk data flows to other international transit providers.

The disruptions – which led to "packet loss" at large scale for cloud providers and raised latency – were first picked up in January by networking engineer Anurag Bhatia on his blog.

An industry source told *The Hindu* the disruptions were caused by an undersea cable cut off the coast of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. These cables account for an overwhelming majority of intercontinental Internet traffic. While the disruptions don't appear to have had a noticeable impact on mobile data and broadband consumers, cloud providers Digital Ocean and Oracle Cloud have started routing traffic via other cable systems.

Compounds disruption

The impacted cable in question, likely MENA SCS (which connects Mumbai to Italy through Oman and Egypt), compounds a disruption from last September to multiple subsea cables in the Red Sea. For MENA and the cables impacted last September, repairs are yet to be completed and may even be on hold as repair ships may hesitate to approach Saudi waters while the Iran conflict is ongoing.

Issue advisory

A Bharti spokesperson did not return a request for comment. Some networks in Europe, like business telephony firm RingCentral uploaded publicly-viewable configuration messages advising traffic to avoid Bharti for Europe-India routes. It is unclear if the cable cuts are fully responsible for the specific disruptions over the past two weeks.

While Oracle "seems to have changed routing preference since last weekend" by transporting data over Tata Communications Ltd's network, Mr. Bhatia later wrote: 'a Digital Ocean engineer said on X, formerly Twitter, the firm "withdrew" routes from Airtel since it was in "total convergence meltdown" viz. network instability."

Repairing subsea cables is cumbersome so even competing telcos customarily allow networks to be used by affected entities.

But the arrangement has its drawbacks. A telco may not always be able to provide the kind of quality of service it does, especially when it needs to share bandwidth with existing customers on an alternate route. Additionally, some alternative routes may require a circuitous route that takes them to faraway Singapore before circling back around to Europe.

For end consumers, this may not always make a major difference though.

'India has 25 days each, of crude, petrol, diesel stocks'

Saptaparno Ghosh
NEW DELHI

India has sufficient stocks of crude oil and energy products (petrol and diesel) for the next 25 days each, cumulatively accounting for 50 days of sufficiency, sources in the government said.

"We are in a reasonably comfortable position as far as crude oil is concerned," a source said, adding, "We have crude oil in reserve for 25 days alongside energy products for 25 days."

The source said the crude reserve does not include that from the emergency-earmarked Special Petroleum Reserve (SPR).

Concerns over India's fuel stock position emerged as tensions rose in West Asia with Israel and U.S. launching strikes on Iran inviting retaliatory attacks by Tehran on Washington's regional allies.

The sources added India was "comfortably placed" with respect to liquefied natural gas (LNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). India had sufficient LNG supplies for the next two to three weeks.

Separately, in a press statement, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry informed it established a 24X7 control room to constantly monitor the supply and stock position of petroleum products in India.

"At present, the Government is reasonably comfortable in terms of stocks. Safeguarding interests of Indian consumers is the highest priority," the Ministry said.

Rough ride: PV industry's profit margins may get affected to the extent of 50-100 basis points in March quarter. V. V. KRISHNAN

Input cost rise to hit PV industry profit in March quarter: CMIE

The Hindu Bureau
MUMBAI

A sharp rise in commodity prices, particularly aluminium and copper, may exert pressure on the Passenger Vehicle (PV) industry's margins and impact its profitability in the March quarter, the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) said in a report.

However, the industry's revenue is likely to grow in double digits on a steady growth in sales volume. The impact of higher input costs was quite evident on margins, CMIE said.

"The industry reported a sequential and year-on-year contraction in profit margins in each of the four quarters ending with the December 2025 quarter. We expect the industry to continue to report margin contraction in the March 2026 quarter," CMIE said.

Prices of commodities used in the manufacturing of vehicles have been on the rise in 2025. Local aluminium prices have been rising since May 2025 and touched record-high levels in January this year. Copper prices also surged to an all-time high in January. Local prices of steel, trending lower in 2025, began to rise in January, CMIE said.

The price rise of semiconductors amid a surge in demand from AI-led data centres also hit manufacturers' profitability. Components such as memory chips (DRAM) saw prices surge up to 300% in 2025.

The chips are essential for the modern vehicle, powering engine control units for fuel efficiency, advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) and critical power electronics for battery management in EVs.

Following the surge in input costs, several PV original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) raised vehicle prices in 2026 ranging from 0.6% to 6% which may not be enough to offset the rise in input costs.

"As a result, we expect around 50-100 basis points y-o-y contraction in the industry's profit margins in the March 2026 quarter."

DEPARTMENT FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF DIFFERENTLY ABLED AND SENIOR CITIZENS
Podium Block, V.V.Tower, Ground Floor, Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Veedhi, Bangalore 560 001. Telephone No. 080-22866066, 080-22866046
Email Address: **dirdwdscka@gmail.com, dir-dwds-ka@nic.in**

No: DEDSC/2025-26/IND0124(Call-2) **Dated: 02-03-2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through E-Procurement only)

Tender is invited by the Director, Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, under e-Procurement platform/e-portal in two parts (i.e., technical bid and financial bid) from the original manufacturers or their authorized dealers for the supply of 235 Talking Laptops equipped with Screen Reader (NVDA) software for visually impaired students during the financial year 2025-26 to the Department for Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens. The intrested bidders may see further details and may login into website : **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

The tender can be submitted on or before **10-03-2026 till 11:00 AM.** The technical bid will be opened on **11-03-2026 at 11:01 AM** and the financial bid will be opened on **12-03-2026 at 11:30 AM**. Department reserves all rights to accept, reject, incorporate changes and re-tender without giving any reasons. For more details contact Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Podium Block, V.V.Tower, 6th floor, Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001, Phone No:080-22866066, 28860907. For more info please see department website **www.dwdsc.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/-
Director,
Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/5968/Zen/2025-26

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813 : Website : www.pspcl.in
(Phone No. 01881-275289) E-mail:se-hq-ggsstp-ropar@pspcl.in

E-Tender Enquiry No. 712/P-2/EMPW-13254 Dated 16.02.2026 Dy. Chief Engineer / Headquarter (Purchase Cell-2) GGSSTP, Rupnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2026_POWER_160381_1 for Hiring consultant for Flexible operation implementation as per CEA guidelines on 4x 210 MW Units of GGSSTP, Ropar.

For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in** from **16.02.2026** onwards.

Note: Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at **https://eproc.punjab.gov.in**

1079/12/2025-26/9043 **RTP 28/26**

Punjab State Grains Procurement Corporation Limited (PUNGRAIN)
Anaaj Bhawan, Sector- 39, Chandigarh
Email: foodpurchase.fcs@punjab.gov.in

PUBLIC NOTICE

Punjab State Grains Procurement Corporation Ltd. (PUNGRAIN) invites quotations from NABL-accredited laboratories for testing of HDPE/PP bags (50 kg capacity) for RMS 2026-27

PUNGRAIN is procuring 2.00 lakh HDPE/PP bales through e-Tender on GeM. As per tender conditions, testing of these bags is required to be conducted in accordance with IS 14887:2014 (50 kg capacity) along with the latest amendments.

Interested NABL-accredited laboratories may submit their detailed technical proposal, copies of valid NABL accreditation certificates, and financial quote/charges for testing of samples of 48 HDPE/PP bags, including collection of samples from Anaaj Bhawan, Sector-39 C, Chandigarh.

A self-declaration regarding non-blacklisting of the laboratory must also be enclosed with the proposal.

Proposals must be submitted through email at: **foodpurchase.fcs@punjab.gov.in**

Last date & time: 09.03.2026 up to 05:00 PM.

PUNGRAIN reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals without assigning any reason.

Dated:03.03.2026

1027/12/2025-26/9052 **Managing Director,Pungrain**

THE HINDU GROUP

FAST-FORWARD IS ABOUT TO TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT.

After a year that refused to slow down, comes a night that refuses to overlook it.

Join us, as we gather to honour the ones who pushed Indian sport into a faster gear and earned their place in the light.

Welcome to the Sportstar Aces Awards 2026.

March 13, 2026 | Mumbai
6:30 PM onwards

Amul Presents SPORTSTAR ACES 2026 #IndiaTriumphs
Co-presented by CASAGRAND building aspirations

Follow our Instagram page for updates.

Presenting Partner: Amul
Co-presenting Partner: CASAGRAND building aspirations
Associate Partners: CHRIST, Bharat Petroleum, Government of Telangana, Sports Authority of Telangana, NTPC

Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Board ADB
Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation
Government of Himachal Pradesh
P57133-001-Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism Development Project in Himachal Pradesh (ADB Funded)

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date of publication: 06.03.2026

1. The Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Board (HPTDB) under Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation, Government of Himachal Pradesh ("the Employer"), invites the online bids on item rate, in electronic tendering system "Open Competitive bidding (OCB), One Stage Two envelop (1S2E)" for the under mentioned work from the eligible Bidders.
2. The details of Contract Package are as follow:-

S. No.	Name of Work	Bid Security (INR)	Document Download Start and time	Pre-bid Meeting (online/ offline)	Deadline for submission/ opening of technical bid and time
1.	"Construction of Wellness Centre along with High End Fountain at Nagrota Bagwan, District Kangra, Himachal Pradesh Contract Package Invitation for Bids No. SITDP-HP_W11/2025-26/.	18.16 million	06.03.2026 at 18:00 Hrs	18.03.2026 at 15:00 Hrs	06.04.2026 i) Deadline of Submission- 15:00 Hrs ii) Technical Bid Opening - 16:00 Hrs
2.	Period of completion.	i) High End Musical Fountain Works: 12 months ii) For all other Works: 24 months			

3. **Availability of Bid Document. Key dates, mode of submission and all other details:** The Bid document is available online and bid should be submitted in online mode on website https://hptenders.gov.in.
4. Date of Opening of Financial Bids (Will be later intimated to all technically responsive bidders).

(--SD--)
The Project Director
Sustainable and Inclusive Tourism Development Project in Himachal Pradesh
Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Board (HPTDB)
Department of Tourism and Civil Aviation
Shanti Bhawan, Phase-3, Sector -6, Kangnadhar, BCS, Shimla-171009, HP, India
Tel: +91-177-2659962, 2659926, 2659925
Email: **projectdirector.adbhp@gmail.com**, Website: **www.himachaltourism.gov.in**
2026-4368

Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited
(Wholly owned Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
(CIN - UO4010KA2002SGC030438)

NOTIFICATION INVITING TENDER (NIT)
(Through KPP Portal Only)

BESCOM invites tender against Enquiry No: BESCOM/2025-26/EL/WORK_INDENT1045 for the "System strengthening works of conversion of existing LT Overhead line into Aerial Bunched (AB) cable at various hazardous loations in W-6 subdivision of R.R Nagar division, Bengaluru West circle, BMAZ (South), BESCOM on percentage basis quoting".

Availability of Bid Documents: 05.03.2026 onwards. Last date for Bid Submission: 06.04.2026 @ 15:00 Hrs. Opening of Technical Bids: 07.04.2026 @ 15:30 Hrs. Pre-Bid meeting: 16.03.2026 @ 11:00 Hrs. Venue: Conference Hall, 3rd Floor, BELAKU BHAVANA, Corporate office, BESCOM, K. R. Circle, Bangalore-560 001. The bid documents can be downloaded and necessary assistance can be obtained through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP) from the website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. KPP portal Help Desk: Phone No: +91 9240214000/+91 9240214001/+91-8046010000/+91-8068948777 E-mail: support@eprochelpdesk.com Aspiring bidders needs to be registered on Karnataka Public Procurement Portal (KPPP). Bidders can take the assistance from the office of the undersigned during working hours.

Sd/- Chief General Manager, Electy., Projects, BESCOM, K.R.Circle, Bengaluru-560001.

For electricity related complaints call 1912
Download BESCOM Mithra MOBILE APP

UNITED NATIONS

Melania Trump presides over UNSC meet on children in conflict

AP

U.S. first lady Melania Trump presided over a UN Security Council meeting on Monday focusing on children in conflict, one of her signature issues, and acknowledged she was doing so in "challenging times". Ms. Melania was the first spouse of a world leader to take the President's seat at the UNSC. AP

GENEVA

UN 'deeply shocked' by West Asia war's impact on civilians, says Turk

AFP

The UN human rights chief said Tuesday he was "deeply shocked" by how the war in the West Asia was affecting civilians, with fear and panic spreading across the region. Volker Turk called on all parties to exercise maximum restraint, prevent further escalation, and take all feasible measures to protect civilians. AFP

BRUSSELS

NATO 'welcomes' talks with France as Macron pledges nuclear buildup

AFP

NATO on Tuesday said it welcomed "the opportunity to expand consultation on nuclear issues" with Paris after President Emmanuel Macron vowed to bolster France's nuclear arsenal. Mr. Macron said on Monday France would expand its atomic arsenal and could deploy nuclear-armed aircraft to allied countries. AFP

ISLAMABAD

Zionists orchestrated Iran war to expand Israel's influence, says Asif

REUTERS

Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif claimed that the Zionists orchestrated the Iran war to expand Israel's influence on the border of Pakistan. "From the establishment of Israel on Palestinian land until today, every catastrophe that has befallen the Islamic world will show the hand of Zionist ideology," Mr. Asif wrote on X. PTI

U.S.-U.K. relation 'not like it used to be': Trump over Britain's support

Starmer refused initial U.S. access to U.K. bases for strikes, allowing it later for 'agreed defensive purposes'; Britain does not 'believe in regime change from the skies', he adds; Trump says U.S. has 'strong relationships with other European countries'

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

U.S. President Donald Trump criticised U.K. Prime Minister Keir Starmer for the U.K.'s refusal to support the initial United States-Israel offensive strikes on Iran, saying the U.S.-U.K. relationship was "not like it used to be".

Mr. Starmer had initially refused U.S. access to U.K. bases, later allowing it only for "agreed defensive purposes".

The relationship was the "most solid relationship of all", Mr. Trump told *The Sun* newspaper, adding, "And now we have very strong relationships with other countries in Europe". The relationship between London and Washington is often referred to as a "special relationship" by both governments. "He [Mr. Starmer] has not been helpful...I never thought I'd see that from the U.K. We love the U.K.," Mr. Trump said, according to reports.

Strained ties: Donald Trump says Keir Starmer 'has not been helpful', adding he 'never thought' he 'would see that from U.K.' AP

Addressing the House of Commons on Monday evening, Mr. Starmer had said there was a "deliberate" decision not to get involved in the initial U.S.-Israel strike on Iran, which began on Saturday morning, and that the U.K. preferred to pursue a negotiated settlement.

"President Trump has expressed his disagreement with our decision not to get involved in the initial strikes," the Prime Minister said, adding that he was, however, acting in Britain's interest.

"We all remember the mistakes of Iraq, and we have learned those lessons," Mr. Starmer said. The Prime Minister repeatedly said that his government had sought legal advice before undertaking operations in the region and that it did not "believe in regime change from the skies".

The Conservative Party backed the United States' actions, party leader Kemi Badenoch said, as she criticised Mr. Starmer for taking time to permit allies to use U.K. bases. She stopped short of suggesting that Britain should have joined the U.S.-Israel strikes.

The far right Reform UK also criticised Mr. Starmer for not joining the strikes.

Pakistan says its forces killed 67 Afghan troops

Associated Press
ISLAMABAD

Afghan forces attacked Pakistani military positions along the border early on Tuesday, triggering intense clashes that left 67 Afghan troops and one Pakistani soldier dead, officials in Islamabad said as cross-border fighting between the two countries entered its fifth day.

The Taliban Defence Ministry in Kabul, the Afghan capital, rejected Pakistan's claim.

A Ministry spokesperson said Afghan forces in the past 24 hours repelled Pakistani attacks, destroying about a dozen military posts and killing four Pakistani soldiers.

The latest Afghan-Pakistan escalation erupted last week with Afghanistan launching attacks on Thursday in retaliation for Pakistani air strikes the previous weekend. Since then, Pakistan has carried out operations along the border and declared it was in an "open war" with Afghanistan, alarming the international community.

Attaullah Tarar

On Tuesday, Pakistan said Afghan forces attacked Pakistan's military in two sections of the two countries' border.

It said 16 locations were attacked along the southern part of the border, in the southwestern districts of Qilla Saifullah, Nushki and Chaman in Pakistan's Balochistan province.

Pakistani troops killed 27 members of the Afghan forces there and "successfully repelled these multiple attacks," Information Minister Attaullah Tarar said.

Mr. Tarar said on X that another wave of attacks hit 25 locations along the northern part of the border, in the northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where Pakistani troops killed 40 members of the Afghan security forces.

In Kabul, Defense Ministry spokesperson Enayatullah Khawarazmi slammed the Islamabad statements as "baseless".

On the draw

Seen no proof that Iran was developing nukes: Russia

Reuters
MOSCOW

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said on Tuesday that Moscow had still seen no evidence that Iran was developing nuclear weapons. Mr. Lavrov told Brunei's Foreign Minister during talks in Moscow: "We still see no evidence that Iran was developing nuclear weapons, which was the main, if not the only, justification for war."

He reiterated Russia's call for a cessation of hostilities by all parties.

Putin and Orban discuss Hungarian POWs captured fighting for Ukraine

Agence France-Presse
MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban on Tuesday discussed the issue of Hungarians captured while fighting for Kyiv, the Kremlin said.

Ukraine is home to a large Hungarian minority, mostly living in the western Zakarpattia region.

Mr. Orban is one of the few European leaders to maintain close ties with Russia amid the war in Ukraine, and has publicly criticised Kyiv for drafting ethnic Hungarians into its army.

"Vladimir Putin held a telephone conversation with Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban," the Kremlin said in a statement.

"Issues concerning Hungarian citizens mobilised into the Ukrainian armed forces and taken prisoner by Russia were also touched on," it added.

Vladimir Putin, right, with Viktor Orban during their meeting at the Senate Palace of the Kremlin in Moscow in November 2025. AP

The Russian Defence Ministry published a video last week purporting to show a dual Hungarian-Ukrainian citizen captured as prisoner of war, alleging he had been forced to enlist in the Ukrainian army.

Last July, Hungary summoned Ukraine's envoy over allegations an ethnic Hungarian man died weeks after military recruiters allegedly assaulted him in Ukraine.

Orban is one of the few European leaders to maintain close ties with Russia

Kyiv says the man was legally mobilised and denied he was beaten.

Mr. Orban and Mr. Putin's call also comes amid a stand-off between Budapest and Kyiv over supplies of Russian oil to Hungary through Ukraine.

Ukraine says the Soviet-era Druzhba pipeline that delivered large amounts of Russian oil to Hungary and Slovakia was damaged in Russian air strikes on January 27.

Slovakia and Hungary, Moscow's closest partners in the European Union, have accused Kyiv of deliberately stalling the pipeline's reopening to put pressure on them. Kyiv rejects this allegation.

The Kremlin said Mr. Orban and Mr. Putin also discussed the war in the West Asia, in particular its implications for the global energy market.

TRIED AND TESTED

We're not trying to do anything different, says Markram

K.R. DEEPAK

I don't know how it's going to work out tomorrow (Wednesday) night, none of us do. But in our dressing room, we choose to look at it with confidence and trust in the plans that have got us here. We're not trying to do anything different — South Africa skipper Aiden Markram ahead of the semifinal against New Zealand.

STAYING POSITIVE

We probably haven't played the perfect game yet: Santner

K.R. DEEPAK

We probably haven't played the perfect game yet, and that can be a positive for us. If we can put it all together, it puts us in a strong position. There are no real secrets about what they'll bring. We know they're going to probably roll out the same team, and a very good team at that — Kiwi captain Mitchell Santner.

FESTIVE FERVOUR

Indian players turning up late for practice leads to speculation

EMMANUAL YOGINI

India delayed its practice session at the Wankhede Stadium by over an hour on Tuesday evening, fuelling speculation that the lunar eclipse had prompted the rethink. The session eventually began after 7 p.m. However, an insider stated that Holi festivities earlier in the day led to the rescheduling.

DIFFERENT METHODS

Abhishek skips nets session, Buttler has an extended stint

EMMANUAL YOGINI

Like India's Abhishek Sharma, England opener Jos Buttler has endured a lean run in the ongoing T20 World Cup. While Abhishek skipped the batting drills on Tuesday, Buttler put in an extended stint in the nets during England's afternoon session at the Wankhede Stadium.

Focus on match-ups as Proteas take on Black Caps

A lot will depend on how the South African batters fare against the Kiwi spinners; Markram's men are the only unbeaten side left in the competition; New Zealand sweats over Henry's fitness

T20 WORLD CUP

Ayan Acharya
KOLKATA

Semifinals distil tournaments to their essence. At Eden Gardens, they also stir memory. South Africa returns to Kolkata for the first semifinal of the ICC T20 World Cup against New Zealand with proof that this ground can bend to visiting will. Last November, the Proteas won a low-scoring Test here by 30 runs, their first in India since 2010. Useful memory, perhaps. Protection, none. T20 offers no shelter.

South Africa arrives unbeaten; New Zealand with familiar composure under pressure. The difference may lie less in invention than in restraint.

Rachin Ravindra's left-arm spin suited Colombo's slow turners. Kolkata is unlikely to offer grip as readily. South Africa's top seven has three left-handers: Quinton de Kock, Ryan Rickelton and David Miller.

Santner could be key

Since mid-2024, they have scored at better than eight an over against left-arm spin in overs seven to 15. So, Ravindra may be a side act here. Captain Mitchell Santner's angles and subtle changes of pace feel likelier to matter.

The symmetry cuts both ways. A left-heavy batting order invites off-spin. Glenn Phillips could be used early against de Kock, vulnerable in that matchup.

Hold Phillips back, though, and he risks confronting the power of right-handers Aiden Markram, Dewald Brevis, Tristan Stubbs and Marco Jansen.

The Kiwis have a selection dilemma too. Persist with Cole McConchie's off-spin, or add seam through Jimmy Neesham/Jacob Duffy, especially with uncertainty over whether Matt Henry will play? The call may hinge on how New Zealand believes the surface will behave under lights.

The closing overs will be decisive. New Zealand has conceded 9.52 per over between overs 15 and 20.

South Africa's boundary percentage in that phase is a modest 16.16, but its dot-ball share under 24, the lowest of all teams, points to a side comfortable accumulating when spectacle fails.

Both teams understand the conditions, having played on varying surfaces in the group stage and Super Eight.

The semifinal will turn on who manages them when the margins shrink.

Gearing up: Rabada will have a big role to play for SA while it remains to be seen whether Kiwi seamer Neesham gets a chance. K.R. DEEPAK

SEMIFINAL

Today's match

Kolkata, 7.00 p.m.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

Played: **19**

South Africa 12 | New Zealand 7

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS 1, 2 & JIOHOTSTAR

Focus is to win the PowerPlay: Markram

Ayan Acharya
KOLKATA

South Africa captain Aiden Markram insists his impressive World Cup record as skipper is a reflection of the group rather than individual leadership.

"I've been fortunate to lead very strong teams," Markram said ahead of the T20 World Cup semifinal against New Zealand. "There's a great mix of youth and experience, and you lean heavily on the senior guys when you have doubts. If the numbers look good, it's because of the group as a whole."

> If the numbers look good, it's because of the group as a whole

Despite a commanding win over New Zealand earlier in the tournament, Markram expects a different contest. "I wish cricket were that easy. They're a quality side, and a semifinal is a fresh start."

On his own batting, Markram acknowledged a conscious shift in approach.

"Opening in T20s means you have to take the game on. The focus is to win the PowerPlay. If you're still in after that, you can be smarter, but the intent up front has been conscious."

Unbeaten so far, South Africa is being labelled as the favourite, but Markram dismissed the noise. "That's just different people's opinions. As a team, we're focused on consistently putting together strong performances and playing the exciting brand of cricket we've worked hard to build over the past 18 months."

Live wire: Brevis has added value to the South African line-up with his aggressive batting and top-class fielding. K.R. DEEPAK

Santner. K.R. DEEPAK

'It's a one-off game now and we back ourselves'

Ayan Acharya
KOLKATA

New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner believes adaptability, not familiarity, will decide the first T20 World Cup semifinal against South Africa here on Wednesday.

"We've played a lot of cricket in these conditions over the years, whether on international tours or in the IPL. South Africa have as well," Santner said. "At this stage, it's about assessing what's in front of you on the day. Conditions can change quickly, and teams that adapt faster put themselves in a good position."

Santner was unfazed about the underdog tag. "We've had that for a long time. It's a one-off game now. We're here now, and we back ourselves in one-off games against most teams".

What secrets does the under-cover Wankhede pitch hold for big game?

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

Twenty-four days after launching its Men's T20 World Cup title defence with a scratchy win over the United States, Suryakumar Yadav's men returned to the Wankhede Stadium on Tuesday night – this time with a semifinal against England looming large.

As the Indian squad went through its fielding drills under lights, the curators quietly covered the 22-yard strip that will dictate fortunes on Thursday. Two days out, the surface wore a greener look than is customary at the Wankhede – even by First-Class standards, let alone a T20 International.

With temperatures climbing steadily over the past fortnight, the decision to retain a healthy grass cover was understandable, a protective measure to prevent the pitch from drying out and breaking up. The pertinent question now is how much of that grass will be shaved off before match time.

Conflab ongoing: Suryakumar, Gambhir and Ramesh Mhamunkar, chief curator of Wankhede Stadium, near the playing surface on Tuesday. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Interestingly, while head coach Gautam Gambhir took a close look at the strip before it was covered, none of the Indian players ambled across to inspect it. Perhaps they are content to wait until match day, drawing cues from the two fixtures already played on this surface earlier in the tournament.

The red-soiled surface slated for Thursday's semifinal was used for England's clash against West Indies on February 11 and the Italy-Nepal game the following day. On both occasions, it offered assistance to spinners, particularly as the games progressed. Yet, much has changed since then – not least the weather and the stakes.

India's preference for truer, flatter decks has been indulged through the Super Eights. Whether that pattern continues at the semifinal stage remains to be seen.

For now, beneath the covers and the coastal humidity, the Wankhede strip holds its secrets close – waiting to reveal them on the biggest night of India's campaign.

Curran hopes to silence the crowd

Amol Karhadkar
MUMBAI

A majority of the England team members in the ongoing ICC T20 World Cup are regulars in the IPL. No wonder that the England camp is expecting a boisterous Wankhede Stadium crowd as much as a flat deck on Thursday.

England all-rounder Sam Curran was excited about the semifinal duel.

"Flying to Mumbai from Sri Lanka, you kind of think about what you were dreaming of as a kid, what would you love to do and that's probably take on India in India. It's such an amazing experience," Curran said on Tuesday.

"It will be incredibly loud and you have got to look at that as an exciting opportunity. If the crowd is silent, England are probably doing well... that's our positive way of looking at it."

Curran also stressed that the experience of playing in front of full houses in the IPL will come in handy for the England players.

Lakshya dethrones Shi in a three-game thriller

BADMINTON

Press Trust of India
BIRMINGHAM

India's Lakshya Sen gave a fine display of his mental strength and physical prowess, defeating China's Shi Yu Qi in a gripping contest, that swung on razor thin margins and relentless pace, in the round-of-32 here on Tuesday.

Lakshya prevailed 23-21, 19-21, 21-17 in a contest that was as physical as it was tactical, marking his first victory over the former World No. 1 in a BWF world tour event. Lakshya had defeated the Chinese in the Asian Games team championships in 2023.

"Lakshya was very calm and composed. Right from the start, he made Shi work hard for every single point, and eventually the Chinese player began to tire," said coach Vimal Kumar.

"At one stage in the second game, I felt Lakshya was getting a bit fatigued, but he recovered well and raised his level. His attacking play was excellent too. Overall, it was a confidence boosting win," Vimal added.

In other matches involving Indians, Malvika Bansod suffered an 11-21, 6-21 loss to China's Chen Yu Fei, while the mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto registered a 21-17, 21-19 win over Hoo Pang Ron and Cheng Su Yin of Malaysia. Later, Unnati Hooda went down fighting to Pornpawee Chochuwong. The Thai won 21-12, 21-18.

Smart play: Lakshya came up with a tactical game to register one of his biggest wins. INSTAGRAM/ALLENGLANDOFFICIAL

INBRIEF

Satriano stars as Getafe deals Real Madrid a body blow

Real Madrid fell to a damaging 1-0 defeat by Getafe at home in LaLiga on Monday, leaving it four points behind leader Barcelona. Alvaro Arbeloa's side, beaten by a superb volley from Martin Satriano, suffered a second consecutive loss in the Liga. Real was beaten at Osasuna last weekend, allowing Barca to overtake it in the title race, and Hansi Flick's side stretched its lead by thrashing Villarreal on Saturday.

The results: LaLiga: Real Madrid 0 lost to Getafe 1 (Satriano 39). **Serie A:** Pisa 0 lost to Bologna 1 (Odgaard 90); Udinese 3 (Kabasele 10, Davis 64-pen, Buksa 90+4) bt Fiorentina 0.

Want to travel through India, climb Mt. Everest: Hamilton

Formula One driver Lewis Hamilton has revealed his dream of exploring India and venturing into the Himalayas, with ambitions to eventually climb Mount Everest.

Kashvee replaces 'rested' Renuka for Australia Test

Pacer Renuka Singh will be unavailable for the pink-ball day-night Test against Australia to be played at the WACA in Perth from March 6 to 9. To manage her workload, Renuka has been advised rest and the BCCI medical team will be closely monitoring her fitness. Kashvee Gautam has been named as Renuka's replacement for the Test.

AIFF orders stadium closure for MBSG's game against Odisha

The All India Football Federation (AIFF)'s disciplinary committee has fined Mohun Bagan Super Giant (MBSG) and ordered that the team's next Indian Super League (ISL) game against Odisha FC be played in an empty stadium, for alleged spectator misconduct during its previous match against Chennayin FC. The club said it has accepted the unspecified financial penalty, while its appeal against the ban on spectators for the March 6 game at the Salt Lake Stadium has been rejected.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru to play five home games at Chinnaswamy Stadium

The season opener, one playoff tie and the final also to be held at the iconic venue; the defending champion will host two other matches at Raipur; KSCA president Prasad expresses delight at the decision and promises to complete all work within the timeline given to the expert committee

IPL

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Ending months of speculation, Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) announced its return to the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here for IPL 2026.

RCB will play five of its home games at the Chinnaswamy Stadium, while the two remaining home matches will be held at the Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh International Cricket Stadium in Raipur, the franchise announced on Tuesday.

The IPL opening match, one playoff match and the final will also be held at the Chinnaswamy Stadium, KSCA secretary Santosh Menon stated.

All set! Decks have been cleared for RCB fans to cheer their team from their favourite ground.
FILE PHOTO: K. MURALI KUMAR

RCB's much awaited homecoming comes after the stadium fell out of favour as a result of the stampede which claimed 11 lives last year. The iconic venue was then barred from hosting high-level cricket by the State government and the police.

"RCB extends its sincere gratitude to the Government of Karnataka, the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and the Karnataka Police for their unwavering guidance, cooperation and support in facilitating the hosting of matches in Bengaluru. The collective efforts to ramp up infrastructure and safety measures in time for the IPL season have ensured that the defending champions will play the majority of their home games in their home ground," an RCB statement read.

The decision to bring the stadium back into the fold comes as a huge relief for the KSCA.

The stadium ban was a central issue in the recent KSCA election, which was won by the team led by former India pacer Venkatesh Prasad.

Earlier this year, the KSCA began work on the stadium to ensure a safer fan experience, in line with the recommendations made in the Karnataka government-appointed Justice John Michael D'Cunha commission.

An elated KSCA President Prasad stated that it was "great to have the IPL back at this iconic venue".

"To have RCB play in Bengaluru makes each and every cricket fan very happy. It is a great achievement for us at the KSCA to make this happen in the span of just two-and-a-half months. This is a bigger achievement than my five-wicket haul against England (Lord's, 1996). Yes, there is a bit more work to be done (to get the stadium ready), but we will definitely deliver within the timeline given to the expert committee," Prasad said.

"I had mentioned in an earlier press conference that the ball was in RCB's court. We are very happy that RCB has responded and played ball," Prasad said.

India faces Vietnam in AFC Women's Asian Cup opener

Press Trust of India
PERTH

The lack of international game time could haunt India when it faces higher-ranked Vietnam in its opening group match of the AFC Women's Asian Cup football tournament here on Wednesday.

Ranked lowest in the group – Japan and Tawian are the other two – India has not played an international since October 2025. Instead, it played against clubs during a four-week camp in Turkiye.

India will hope to each the knockout round which will allow it to take a shot at 2027 FIFA World Cup qualification.

India faces Japan on March 7 here, while its final group match will be against Taiwan on March 10.

It was a terrifying experience: Sindhu recalls Dubai ordeal

BADMINTON

Uthra Ganesan
NEW DELHI

Back home after being stranded in Dubai for a couple of days, P.V. Sindhu was admittedly disappointed at missing out on the prestigious All England championships but agreed that safety considerations were paramount.

"It was a terrifying experience, it was the first time going through something like that and hopefully the last," Sindhu said during an interaction with select media late on Tuesday evening.

"It was worse because there was little information also, given the uncertain situation. We were informed that the airspace had been shut and were accommodated at the transit hotel itself.

"What made it more scary was the coach (Irwansyah) was still at the airport when he heard a loud noise less than 100m away. Many people including him were then evacuated and taken to a different hotel," she explained.

Sindhu is hoping to make it to the Swiss Open next week.

Sindhu was, however, all praise for the Indian authorities including the consulate officials for facilitating the return.

"It is obviously not ideal to miss the All England. I have written to the BWF explaining the situation and they have been very positive since the situation is so unusual.

"I should hear from them in a day or two with clarity on how the rankings, participation and other things will pan out.

> I think the penalty for missing the competition will be waived off since the situation was beyond my control

I think the penalty for missing the competition ($5000) will be waived off since the situation was beyond my control.

I am now hoping to find a way to make it to the Swiss Open next week. It is not easy because all the flights are either packed or cancelled," she said.

LIVE TELECAST

Men's T20 World Cup: Star Sports 1 & JioHotstar, 7 p.m.
Bundesliga: Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 1 a.m. (Thursday)
Premier League: SS Select 1, 2 & JioHotstar, 1 a.m. (Thursday)
Serie A: DAZN, 1 a.m. (Thursday)

SNAPSHOTS

Vaishnavi in Indian team for BJK Cup
NEW DELHI: Promising Vaishnavi Adkar was on Tuesday drafted into the Indian team for the Billie Jean King Cup Asia/Oceania Group I tie, to be held here from April 6.
The team: Sahaja Yamalapalli, Shrivalli Bhamidipaty, Rutuja Bhosale, Ankita Raina, Vaishnavi Adkar, Vaidehee Chaudhari (Reserve).

Easy for Karnataka
JAIPUR: Karnataka registered a six-wicket win over Jammu & Kashmir in a BCCI U-23 women's One Day Trophy match in Jaipur.
The scores: Jammu & Kashmir 211/7 in 50 overs (Bawandeep Kaur 88) lost to Karnataka 212/4 in 40.3 overs (Chandasi Krishnamurthy 42 n.o., Mithila Vinod 41 n.o.).

Vaishnavi starts well
KALABURAGI: Third-seeded Indian Vaishnavi Adkar began her campaign at the ITF W35 Kalaburagi main draw with 6-0, 6-3 victory over compatriot Chevika Reddy Sama on Tuesday. Ten day ago, Vaishnavi, 21, had become the first Indian woman since Sania Mirza to reach an ITF W100 Final in Bengaluru.
Other results: Michika Ozeki (Jpn) bt Laxmisiri Dandu 4-6, 6-1, 6-0; Maayan Laron (Isr) bt Amodini Naik 6-0, 6-1; Sofia Martianova (Rus) bt Arunkumar Lakshmi Prabha 6-4, 6-2.

Nihal does the star turn in DTDC SC's facile win
BENGALURU: Nihal Ullal scored an unbeaten 92 as DTDC SC beat KPTCL Sports Organisation by 119 runs in the KSCA (Group II) first division tournament.
The scores: HAL SC 103/8 in 20 overs lost to Central Excise & Customs 106/3 in 9.5 overs (Niranjan 45, Thippa Reddy 40 n.o.).
AGORC 191/6 in 20 overs (B.R. Sharath 46, S.J. Nikin Jose 43, J. Suchith 47 n.o.) bt NR Sports Group 163/9 in 20 overs (Gowtham Sagar 42, G. Harshavardhan 41, Madhav P. Bajaj 54).
DTDC SC 228/2 in 20 overs (Nihal Ullal 92 n.o., Praveen Dubey 108 n.o.) bt KPTCL Sports Organisation 109/8 in 20 overs.

Success and failure in sport do not depend on cheques and balances

BETWEEN WICKETS
Suresh Menon

The Pakistan Cricket Board fining its players five million Pakistani rupees each for failing to qualify for the semifinals is another in the list of bizarre decisions it has taken around the World T20. There's nothing like kicking a team when it's down!

The successful, the struggling, the nearly men all have to pay. Throwing money at a problem is seldom an effective way of solving it. Neither is doing the reverse. Success and failure in sport do not depend on cheques and balances.

Thirty years ago, at another World Cup, India beat Pakistan in a quarterfinal, and there were riots in that country. Indians remained smug, telling one another that such things would never happen here. One newspaper editorial called Pakistan's defeat evidence of "the inherent superficiality of the Pakistani 'nation'."

And then it happened in India. Crowds in Kolkata rioted even as India were losing to Sri Lanka. India's patronising disapproval of the overreaction in Pakistan now looked misplaced. One commentator called it the "lumpenisation of the middle class". Theories flew thick and fast. Why did Wasim Akram pull out against India? Why did Mohammed Azharuddin choose to field on winning the toss?

Mike Marqusee wrote later, "In accounting for victory or defeat, the cock-up is generally to be preferred to the conspiracy theory." But when you harness cricket to nation, conspiracy theories are inevitable.

So what will happen if India do not win this World Cup? It's an interesting thought experiment.

It is unlikely the sky will fall, although it might appear that way if you follow television debates or that bane of the losing team anywhere – the trending hashtag.

Cricket has become a referendum on national temperament. Victory confirms destiny; defeat demands inquiry commissions. A loss is seen as a morality tale.

Fallout

The immediate consequence is noise. Former players will speak of 'intent,' something apparently measurable by modern gizmos. The captain will be analysed for his facial expressions. Did he smile too much? Did he not smile enough? And what of the coach? In a country that reads meaning into the silence of rocks, the raised eyebrow of a cricketer can trigger a week-long debate.

The search for 'culprits' will begin. The young will be called immature; the seniors seen as being past their best. The team management will be accused of thinking in straight lines in a game of loops and swerves. An expert will ask if the IPL which has made millionaires killed their ambition? The IPL will, however, be hailed as the nursery of champions when the team next wins something.

Administrators, meanwhile, will discover the therapeutic value of meetings. Committees will be formed, and words like 'process' and 'pathway' will be thrown about. The Board will promise introspection with all the assumed honesty of a political party which has lost an election.

For the players, a missed catch or a mistimed scoop will replay in their minds long after the television studios have found a new outrage. Social media, that vast theatre of instant expertise, will alternate between affection and amnesia, for heroes become has-beens quickly in the shortest format.

Something else might happen too. A new player will work a little harder in the nets. A senior pro will add a variation. A coach will whisper reassurance where the world shouts accusation. Indian cricket has known defeat before and knows how to handle it.

Tournaments are not morality plays. They are sporting events, subject to chance, form, and the thin margins that separate a six from a catch. In T20 cricket, chaos is not an intruder, it is a long-time resident. To demand inevitability from such a format is to misunderstand its very design.

If India do not win the World T20, there will be disappointment of course, even indignation. There will also be job losses, the coach being the time-tested candidate. But there will also be the continuity of a system too large, too passionate, and too invested to be undone by a fortnight of cricket. The team will be criticised, reconfigured, and resurrected.

And when the next tournament arrives, hope will return with indecent haste. For in Indian cricket, memory is short, expectation eternal, and redemption just one victory away.

Recognition: The Indian team with the World Cup. FILE PHOTO: EMMANUAL YOGINI

World Cup-winning Indian women's cricket team nominated for Laureus honour

Press Trust of India
MADRID

The Indian women's cricket squad has been nominated for the prestigious 2026 Laureus World Team of the Year Award following their maiden World Cup title triumph.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led side is nominated alongside teams like the England women's football team, European Ryder Cup squad, Oklahoma City Thunder NBA basketball team, French football league's Paris Saint-Germain, and McLaren Formula 1.

The team joins a select group of Indian athletes who were nominated for main Laureus categories, including Vinesh Phogat (2019), Neeraj Chopra (2022), and Rishabh Pant (2025).

The award will be announced at a gala event to be held at the Cibeles Palace in Madrid on April 20.